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HIGH ALERT

WHO probing polio case in Meghalaya

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U.S. ready for a Harris presidency, says Obama

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PM arrives in Warsaw for bilateral meet

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Row over Centre's share in Chennai metro rail project

Phase II is the need of the hour in the city

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READY TO ROLL

Ultimate Table Tennis Season 5 from today

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17 workers killed as fire breaks out after 'reactor blast' at A.P. pharma plant

Harish Gilai
ANAKAPALLI

At least 17 workers were killed and 20 sustained burns in a fire that broke out reportedly after a reactor blast in a plant that manufactures intermediate chemicals and pharmaceutical ingredients in the Special Economic Zone at Atchutapuram in Anakapalli of Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday.

The death toll is likely to go up as bodies of several workers were feared trapped under the rubble of the slab from the first floor of the four-storey building housing Escientia Advanced Sciences Private Ltd. Body parts of some workers were thrown to some distance on the company premises. Thick smoke engulfed the area.

Tragic incident: An ambulance coming out of the pharma company in Anakapalli on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ten fire tenders from Anakapalli and Visakhapatnam, apart from a few from various pharma units, rushed to the spot. Two teams of the National Disaster Response Force were deployed. The personnel rescued workers stuck on the third floor.

As many as 381 workers have been working in two shifts in the company. The blast took place around 2.15 p.m., during shift change.

Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu ordered a high-level inquiry.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

Centre debates taking a caste count during Census

A column on caste in the survey form is being considered, says a top government source; move comes amid persistent demands from Congress and other parties to conduct such an exercise

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Union government is yet to take a call on conducting the next Census, but active discussion is on to expand the data collection to include caste enumeration, a top government source told *The Hindu*.

"Discussions are on to include a column to record the caste of people during the next Census exercise. No decision has been taken yet," the source said.

The move comes amid persistent demands by the Congress and other political parties, including National Democratic Alliance partners of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, to record caste.

Past attempts

Other than enumeration of SCs and STs, the caste-wise count of population as part of the Census has not been done in Independent India

- In 2011, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) conducted the first-ever caste count, separate from the Census exercise, but the findings were never made public
- In 2015, the Congress government in Karnataka commissioned a caste census, the report of which has not been made public

- Bihar was one of the first States to conduct and publish a caste census report in 2023

"One of the reasons that has indefinitely delayed the Census is also the demand by political parties to conduct a caste census. Any wrong narrative can upset the whole exercise," the source said.

Other than enumerating the Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST), a caste-wise count of population as part of the Census has not been done in Independent India.

In 2011, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) conducted the first-ever caste count, separate from the Census exercise, but the findings were never made public.

2021 affidavit

In 2021, the Union government submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court that the caste data enumerated in the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) of 2011 was fraught with "mistakes and inaccuracies".

The total number of castes, according to the 1931 Census, was 4,147 and the SECC compiled more than 46 lakh castes, sub-castes and names.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 14

IN BRIEF

Dalit bodies hold stir against SC's sub-quota order

NEW DELHI/PATNA/BHOPAL
Coalition groups representing more than 21 Dalit and Adivasi associations on Wednesday held protests against the Supreme Court's judgment on sub-categorisation. » Page 14

72 protesters held for rioting in Badlapur

MUMBAI
Following a massive protest at the Badlapur railway station in Maharashtra over the alleged sexual abuse of two girls at a school, 300 protesters have been booked and 72 arrested, the police said. » Page 16

Growth of e-commerce a matter of concern: Goyal

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday hit out at predatory pricing policies of e-commerce players such as Amazon, signalling that the sharp growth of online retail could cause a huge "social disruption" by eating into the prospects of 100 million small stores that create jobs across India.

"I don't see it as a matter of pride that half our market could be driven by e-commerce 10 years from now. It's a matter of concern," he said.

FULL REPORT ON
» PAGE 17

Crumbling hills

Broken and battered: A damaged road after a massive landslip triggered by heavy rain at Baluganj in Shimla on Wednesday. As many as 55 roads are reportedly blocked in Himachal Pradesh following landslips and floods. PTI

Champai Soren says he will form new political party, raise voice for Dalits, tribes

Amit Bhelari
PATNA

Champai Soren, Jharkhand Mukti Morcha leader and former Jharkhand Chief Minister, on Wednesday announced that he would form a new political party.

"I have decided that I will not retire from politics and will form my own political party. Along with it, if I find a friend who talks about the interests of tribal people and Dalits, I will move forward with them. Everyone knows that when I was nothing, I used to raise my voice for the rights of the tribal people and Dalits, I used to fight for them," Mr. Champai said, addressing a gathering in his home district of Seraikela-Kharsawan.

Champai Soren

In a social media post on Sunday, Mr. Champai alleged that he had felt insulted by the JMM, while describing the events that led to his resignation as Chief Minister on July 3. He said he was shattered by the manner in which he was asked to resign to make way for Hemant Soren. On Wednesday, he met his supporters at his residence at Jilinggora and then addressed gatherings at several places.

On Tuesday night, he said that he had once decided to retire from politics, but, after seeing the enthusiasm of his supporters, he decided against it. When Mr. Champai landed in New Delhi on Sunday, there was speculation that he would join the BJP. Reacting to the rumours, he told presspersons at his village that he had gone to the national capital to meet his daughter and grandchildren.

Do not declare recruitment drive results till Haryana poll is over: EC

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission of India (EC) on Wednesday asked the Haryana government not to declare the results of the recruitment drive for teachers and police constables in the State till the completion of the Assembly election in order to ensure a level playing field for all political parties.

The EC, however, said that the recruitment process does not violate the guidelines of the model code of conduct (MCC).

Haryana will have a single-phase election on October 1, with results to be declared on October 4. The EC was acting on complaints by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh, who alleged that the recruitment process – to fill 5,600 vacancies for constables in Haryana Police, 76 posts of two categories of teachers by the Haryana Staff Selection Commission, and various posts by the Haryana Public Service Commission – violated the MCC.

'Within MCC rules'

In a letter to Mr. Ramesh, the EC said its MCC rules do not bar any continuing regular recruitment process or promotion through the UPSC, the State public service commission, the staff selection commission, or any other such statutory authority. However, recruitments through non-statutory bodies require prior clearance from it.

The EC said "in order to ascertain the facts relating to the alleged complaints, reports were called for from the government of Haryana through the Chief Electoral Officer, Haryana, which have been received on August 20".

After ascertaining the facts and studying the existing MCC guidelines, the EC said it found no violation in the ongoing recruitment process. It also noted that the drive was initiated before the announcement of the poll on August 16.

"However, in order to maintain a level playing field and to ensure that no undue advantage is accrued to anyone, the Commission has directed the State government not to declare the results of these recruitments till completion of the election to the Assembly," the EC said.

No let-up in protests across Kolkata over rape, murder of doctor; Governor meets victim's kin

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

Twelve days after the rape and murder of a doctor at the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital, there has been no let-up in protests, with over a dozen rallies organised across Kolkata on Wednesday.

West Bengal Governor C.V. Ananda Bose visited the residence of the victim and met her family. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had visited the residence of the victim on August 12.

As political parties, particularly the BJP, took to the streets demanding the resignation of the Chief Minister, doctors marched to Swastha Bhawan, headquarters of the State Health Department.

Former sportspersons gather demanding justice over the rape and murder at R.G. Kar MCH, Kolkata, on Wednesday. DEBASISH BHADURI

Among those protesting and taking out processions were sports personalities, engineers, and journalists.

ED probe sought

Even as the Central Bureau of Investigation questioned Sanjib Kumar Ghosh, the former principal of the hospital for the fifth consecutive day, former deputy superintendent of the hospital Akhtar Ali moved the Calcutta High Court demanding a probe by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) into the alleged financial irregularities by the former principal.

Justice Rajarshi Bharadwaj granted permission to Mr. Ali to file the petition, seeking an order directing the ED to probe alleged financial irregularities committed by Dr. Ghosh.

While Kolkata Police had arrested a civic police volunteer, Sanjay Roy, in connection with the crime, the former principal of the college has remained in the eye of the storm as several allegations have been levelled against him.

The West Bengal government has set up a Special Investigation Team to probe the alleged financial irregularities and booked the former principal on charges of corruption.

The Trinamool Congress leadership has also raised questions on the CBI investigation into the case. "165+ HOURS, NO visible progress! How much longer will @CBIHeadquarters take to provide justice to the victim of the R G Kar tragedy?" the Trinamool posted on social media.

CISF officials arrive

During the day, senior officials of the Central Industrial Security Force arrived at the medical college and held meetings with the police and hospital authorities on deployment of central forces on the premises.

The Supreme Court had directed deployment of central forces at the college, which was vandalised by a mob on August 15.

RELATED REPORTS
» PAGE 4

Delhi's Climate Action Plan to be overhauled, says Gopal Rai

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Wednesday said the government has started the process of overhauling the city's 2019 Climate Action Plan and that he will submit a new draft policy to the Centre within the next two weeks.

The Delhi government developed the 2019 Climate Action Plan to address the city's climate change risks and vulnerabilities.

Mr. Rai said the revised policy will focus on seven critical sectors, including water and waste. He made the announcement after chairing a conference to discuss the need to overhaul the five-year-old policy in light of the "unprecedented heatwaves and record rain" in the city.

Protest rocks MCD House as BJP raises drowning deaths, delay in mayoral elections

Satvika Mahajan
NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) House was adjourned without a discussion on Wednesday as ruckus marred its proceedings, with the BJP seeking to corner the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) over the delay in the mayoral polls and the incidents of drowning due to waterlogging in the city.

The BJP members also blamed AAP for the delay in the constitution of the MCD Standing Committee – the civic body's main decision-making arm that has executive powers to grant approval to projects worth over ₹5 crore.

The constitution of the crucial panel has been pending since the mayoral polls that were held in March 2023.

BJP councillors protesting on the civic body premises on Wednesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The House was adjourned twice – for 15 and 30 minutes respectively. However, the protest continued. Several BJP members entered the Well of the House with banners amid continuous sloganeering, leading to the suspension of BJP councillors Gajender Singh Daral (Mundka), Pankaj Luthra (Jhilmil), Amit Nagpal (Pitampura), and Ravinder Negi (Vinod Nagar).

'Unconstitutional'

The Leader of the Opposition, Raja Iqbal Singh, opposed the suspension of his party councillors. "This is completely unconstitutional," he said.

On the other hand, AAP members blamed the BJP for "misusing the House proceedings to protest". "They did not let us talk about waterlogging or pose questions to officials," said AAP's Manglapuri councillor Narender Kumar.

An AAP councillor said it was wrong to blame his party for the delay in the mayoral elections as these were postponed by Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena in April this year.

Doctors' protest enters Day 10; AIIMS Director announces security audit

Around 500 govt. hospital doctors stage a protest at Jantar Mantar, offer free OPD consultation; AIIMS Director urges protesters to resume work, announces panels to review security measures

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Resident doctors from three major government hospitals in the city – AIIMS, Safdarjung, and Lady Hardinge Medical College – staged a demonstration at Jantar Mantar on Wednesday.

On the tenth day of the ongoing stir by the resident doctors' associations, called in response to the incident in Kolkata, the medicos offered outpatient department (OPD) services free of cost to the public.

The doctors have been demanding a Central law for the safety of medical professionals working at hospitals across the country. Around 500 doctors participated in the protest.

Meanwhile, AIIMS Director Dr. V. Srinivas appealed to the doctors to resume duties in the interest of patient care. In a statement issued on Wednesday, he said, "The entire AIIMS family stands behind the cause of safety of all healthcare professionals. However, as doctors, our supreme duty is also to ensure that the patients visiting our portals do not go unattended."

Loud and clear: A doctor holding up a placard during the protest at Jantar Mantar; (right) a visitor being offered free medical consultation. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA/SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

He added that the administration has decided to undertake "a collaborative internal security audit with regard to the safety and security of the healthcare professionals, staff, patients, and visitors".

The AIIMS Director also announced a 15-member committee to facilitate the audit. The panel will visit AIIMS's outreach campuses in the National Capital Region during the day as well as at night to survey the existing security measures.

To address the immediate concerns of the healthcare professionals at the Delhi campus, another four-member committee has been constituted.

AI cameras

The AIIMS administration has also decided to install AI-enabled CCTV cameras at key entry and exit points of the Mother and Child block on a pilot basis, said an official.

"Such cameras shall be able to recognise all visitors with facial recognition technology and help security staff to identify persons entering and exiting frequently, thereby helping them in access control of unauthorised personnel," the official added.

90% drop in surgeries

Meanwhile, a status report shared by the hospital on Wednesday evening showed that the OPD services saw a 65% drop over a normal working day while the number of surgeries reduced by 90%. However, intensive care units and emergency services functioned as usual.

(With inputs from PTI)

Boy dies from electrocution at e-rickshaw charging point

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A seven-year-old boy died from electrocution after he came in contact with a live wire at an illegal e-rickshaw charging point near a public toilet in north-west Delhi's Shalimar Bagh, the police said on Wednesday.

The incident took place Tuesday morning when the victim, Suraj, had gone to use the toilet. The victim's family members and relatives held a demonstration and demanded action against the guilty.

The police have arrested a man named Ramnath Rai and booked him under Section 106 (causing death by negligence) of the BNS.

Expedite pending postings of UPSC-selected doctors: L-G

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lieutenant-Governor V.K. Saxena on Wednesday asked officials to resolve the issue of the pending postings of 23 doctors who were selected through the Union Public Services Commission (UPSC) but have been awaiting appointments at Delhi government hospitals for over a year now.

According to Raj Niwas officials, the L-G was told at a review meeting that the doctors could not be posted as Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal-led National Capital Civil Service Authority, which decides on such issues, has not held a meeting since his arrest in cases linked to the now-scrapped 2021-22 Delhi excise policy.

Bharadwaj had earlier accused Saxena of ignoring the issue of doctors' shortage at Delhi govt. hospitals

Responding to it, AAP said it had highlighted the issue of the shortage of doctors at Delhi government hospitals multiple times and that the L-G must answer why it took him such a long time to look for a solution to the problem.

Earlier, Health Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj had accused Mr. Saxena of ignoring the "acute shortage of doctors despite multiple letters flagging the issue in the past year".

However, a Raj Niwas official said the 23 doctors could not be appointed even after the UPSC forwarded their dossiers to the Health Department in July last year. He said the L-G expressed "serious concern" over the delay due to the "lack of inter-departmental communication" and instructed officials to expedite the appointment process that has been "unduly pending for years".

'Accepted responsibility'

In a statement, AAP said, "The L-G office has finally accepted that Mr. Saxena is responsible for the recruitment of doctors, specialists, nurses, paramedics, and technicians at Delhi government hospitals."

Timings
DELHI

THURSDAY, AUG. 22		
RISE	05:55	SET 18:54
RISE	20:43	SET 08:28
FRIDAY, AUG. 23		
RISE	05:55	SET 18:52
RISE	21:18	SET 09:35
SATURDAY, AUG. 24		
RISE	05:56	SET 18:51
RISE	21:55	SET 10:42

Delhi Weather	max	min
Delhi City	36	26
Safdarjang	36	26
Palam	35	26

Delhi Palam Today
35ºC Morning will be pleasant. Day will be warm with cloudy sky. Spell of light rain and thundershower with gusty winds may occur.

Delhi Palam Tomorrow
34ºC The weather will be warm with cloudy sky. Night will be comfortable. Spell of light rain and thundershower may occur at some places.

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Pathak goes to HC after Tihar Jail denies him meeting with CM

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) general secretary and Rajya Sabha member Sandeep Pathak on Wednesday challenged before the Delhi High Court an order by the Tihar Jail authorities denying him a meeting with Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in prison.

Mr. Pathak termed the prison authority's decision "completely unjustified" and sought a direction to the jail authorities to allow him the right to visit the CM who is lodged in Tihar Jail in an excise policy-related case.

The jail authorities had permitted the AAP leader to meet Mr. Kejriwal twice but refused to give him permission to meet on April 24, claiming that certain statements made by the Rajya Sabha member after meeting the CM were "politically motivated" and in contravention of the prison rules.

Jail authorities said AAP leader violated norms by speaking to the media about his meeting with Kejriwal

Tihar Jail authorities contended before the court that Mr. Pathak had violated the norms by speaking to the media about the deliberations he had with Mr. Kejriwal and that they are not in favour of allowing him the facility of physical "mulakat" with the inmate in view of his conduct.

Mr. Pathak said political speech is an essential part of democracy.

"General talk with political undertones cannot be denied to a person visiting an undertrial prisoner unless they result in violation of any law," he argued.

The High Court will continue hearing the case on Thursday.

At 77.48 lakh, Delhi Metro logs record daily ridership

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Delhi Metro registered its highest-ever count of daily passenger journeys at 77.48 lakh on August 20. The urban transporter shared the data in a post on X on Wednesday, saying it has surpassed its previous milestone accomplished on August 13 this year.

Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC)'s current network span is nearly 393 km with 2,888 stations, including the Noida-Greater Noida Metro Corridor and Rapid Metro, Gurugram.

Meanwhile, the National Capital Region Transport Corporation on Wednesday signed a memorandum of understanding with the DMRC for an integrated ticketing system, allowing passengers to book tickets for RRTS and Delhi Metro from a single platform as part of the "one India, one ticket" initiative.

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LEGAL NOTICE

BEFORE THE HON'BLE CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE (COMMERCIAL COURT), AT BENGALURU [CCH-84]
C.O.M. O.S. NO. 629 / 2024
PLAINTIFF: ITC Limited, A company within the meaning of the Companies Act, 2013 Having its registered office at: 37 Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Kolkata - 700 071. And the office having its Foods Division at: ITC Limited, No. 18 Banaswadi Main Road, Maruthiseva Nagar, Bengaluru-560 005. **-V/s-**
DEFENDANTS: Mr. Vinay Gupta and Another
PUBLIC NOTICE
To, **Mr. Vinay Gupta,** Aged about 29 years, Son of Mr. Satya Prakash Gupta Having his address at: H. No. 384, Sector 43, Golf Course Road, Galleria DLF-IV, Gurugram, Haryana - 122009.
Whereas, the Plaintiff above named, ITC Limited has instituted a suit against you inter alia seeking reliefs of permanent injunction and compensatory damages and you are hereby summoned to appear before this Court in person or by a pleader duly instructed (and able to answer all material questions relating to the suit, or who shall be accompanied by some person, able to answer all such questions, on **23-09-2024** at 11 o'clock in the forenoon, to answer the claim; and as the day fixed for your appearance is appointed for the final disposal of the suit, you must be prepared to produce on that day all the witnesses upon whose evidence and all the documents upon which you intend to rely in support of your defence.
take Notice that in default of Your appearance on the day before mentioned, the suit will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the court on 20-08-2024.
By order of the court, Senior Sheristedar, Commercial Court unit, City civil court at Bangalore.
Advocate for Plaintiff:
M/s DUA ASSOCIATES
No.130/1, 2nd Floor, Ulsoor Road, Bengaluru-560042.

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Kapila Tanwar, D/o Sh. Umesh Kumar, R/o. C/C3A-359, 1st Floor, Pratibha Niwas, Janakpuri, have changed my minor son's name from Kartik Tanwar alias Shayaan Tanwar to Shayaan Tanwar, for all future purposes.

I, AKANKSHA Parasar D/o Munmun Singh R/o 530B Regent Indirapuram, Ghaziabad 201014, have changed my name to Akanksha Parashar vide affidavit dated 08/08/24 at Indirapuram

LEGAL NOTICE

BEFORE THE HON'BLE XXXV ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE, BENGALURU AT BENGALURU (CCH-36)
O.S. No. 7586 of 2023
BETWEEN : **Lakshmi Ravindra Hebbalkar,** Wife of Ravindra Hebbalkar, Aged about 48 years, Residing at Kuvempunagara, Indalga, Belagavi - 591 108. ...Plaintiff No.1
G C Prakash, Son of Chennagirayappa, Aged about 59 years, Residing at 701, A4 Block, Ganga Apartment, NGV Quarters, Koramanagala, Bangalore - 560 034. ...Plaintiff No.2
Archana M S, Wife of Mahesh, Aged about 50 years, Residing at 101, 1st Floor, Evanth Aristi, Jayanagar, 8th Block, Bangalore, Bangalore - 560 070. ...Plaintiff No.3
Nischal B H, Son of H. Gowda, Aged about 45 years, Residing at 41, 1st Cross, 2nd Block, Anjaneya Nagara, BSK, 3rd Stage, Bangalore - 560 085. ...Plaintiff No.4
AND : **Mr. Nataraja Sharma and others** ...Defendants
SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT NO. 22 UNDER ORDER V RULE 20(1A) OF THE CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE, 1908
To, **D22 : New Delhi Television Network Limited,** A company incorporated under the Companies Act having CIN U22300DL2008PLC183756 having office 207, OKHLA Industrial Estate Phase – III, New Delhi, Delhi 110020, India (Represented by its Director) ...Defendant No. 22
Whereas the Plaintiffs have instituted the above proceedings against you seeking judgment and decree of:
a. Permanent injunction restraining the Defendants, their agents, anchors, news readers, correspondents, employees, servants or any person claiming through or under them, subsidiaries, parent company or any related entities, either jointly or severally from transmitting, broad casting, publishing, distributing, sharing or webhosting in any print, electronic or other medium any statement or other content whatsoever which defames or is calculated to defame the Plaintiffs in relation to supply of food under the ICDS Scheme pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble High Court of Karnataka in Writ Petition No. 3522 of 2022;
b. Mandatory injunction directing the Defendants to publish an unconditional apology for the defamatory statements made and to unconditionally withdraw all such defamatory statements;
c. Mandatory injunction directing the Defendants to take down all defamatory statements transmitted, broadcasted, published, distributed, shared, webhosted in any print, electronic or other medium made against the Plaintiffs in relation to supply of food under the ICDS Scheme;
d. Pass such other order or directions as this Hon'ble Court deems fit in the interest of justice and equity.
You are hereby summoned to appear before the CCH-36, the XXXV Additional City Civil and Sessions Judge, at Bengaluru in person or by pleader duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the above proceedings **on 27/08/2024 at 11 AM.** Take notice that in default of your appearance on the day mentioned before the Court, the suit will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of this Court, this 01/08/2024.
By order of the Court,
Senior Sheristedar,
City Civil Court, Bengaluru.
Advocate for Plaintiff : Rohan Tigadi
TLaw Chambers, Unit No. 304, "A" Block, St. Patrick's Complex, Brigade Road, Bengaluru - 560 025.
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A ND-NDE

INBRIEF

Adityanath targets Akhilesh Yadav over his 'PDA' slogan

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday hit out at Akhilesh Yadav over his 'PDA' slogan, accusing the Samajwadi Party (SP) president of showing disrespect towards OBC leader and former CM Kalyan Singh. Speaking at the 'Hindu Gaurav Divas' event on the third death anniversary of the leader, Mr. Adityanath targeted Mr. Yadav for not paying tributes to Singh, a major figure in the Ram Temple movement, "instead mourning the death of gangster Mukhtar Ansari". Kalyan Singh, who was the Chief Minister when the Babri Masjid was attacked by 'karsevaks' on December 6, 1992, passed away on August 21, 2021. PTI

Dentist's 'abduction' by police: SC ask CBI to conduct probe

The Supreme Court has ordered the CBI to conduct a preliminary enquiry to probe the alleged abduction of a dentist by Chandigarh Police personnel to prevent him from appearing in a court. A Bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah said it was not inclined to interfere with a Punjab and Haryana High Court order that directed for the registration of an FIR and setting up of a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the issue. The court, however, said an inquiry into the matter may be entrusted with the Central Bureau of Investigation for an independent probe. PTI

J&K election body sets up centres to monitor fake news

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

Election Department removes 28,000 defacements within 72 hours of the announcement of Assembly polls

Command-and-control centres have been set up in the offices of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) at Jammu and Srinagar to initiate "strict and prompt action against any suspected case of fake news" during the Assembly elections in J&K.

"To curb spread of misinformation and uphold the integrity of the electoral process in the upcoming Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, command-and-control centres have been set up in the offices of the Chief Electoral Officer at Jammu and Srinagar. Similarly, on a smaller scale, control rooms are now functional 24x7 in all 20 offices of Deputy Commissioners," an official spokesman said.

He said these centres will be equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure and the latest technologies. "The centres will function round-the-clock to keep a close vigil on all election-related activities, ensuring strict and prompt action, including against any suspected cases of fake news," a statement from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, said.

These centres will bolster the electoral process and provide a collaborative workspace to review the situation in all 90 constituencies, the spokesperson added.

'Strict vigil'

The centres will also keep a strict vigil on social media channels and media portals, accounts, and elements "who may attempt to build any narrative which could prove detrimental to peace, in violation of the Election Commission of India's Model Code of Conduct (MCC)".

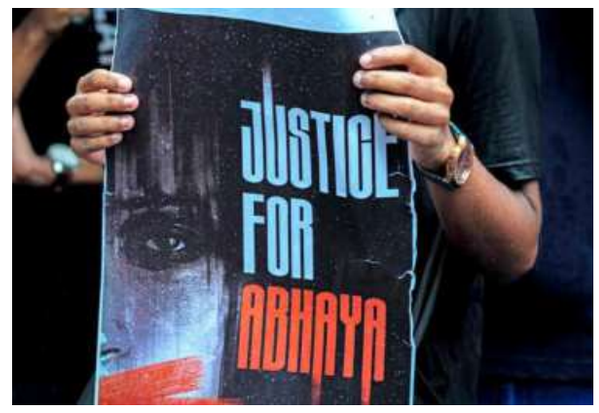
Meanwhile, the Election Department has removed 28,000 defacements across J&K within 72 hours of the announcement of the Assembly elections.

"As many as 1,837 wall inscriptions, 9,276 posters, 5,661 banners and 11,862 other defacements on government, public and private properties were removed," an official said.

Durga Puja committees reject govt. honorarium over R.G. Kar shocker

Hospital rape-murder incident casts a shadow on the upcoming festival as several puja organisers across West Bengal decline the ₹85,000 grant to express solidarity with the massive protests

Shrabana Chatterjee
Moyurie Som
KOLKATA



A poster at a protest rally by junior doctors' association and nursing staff in Kolkata against the rape-murder in a hospital. FILE PHOTO

Ripples of the State-wide protests against the rape and murder of a female doctor on August 9 at Kolkata's R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital (RGKMCH) have dampened this year's Durga Puja spirits, with multiple puja organisers rejecting the yearly festive honorarium given by the Trinamool Congress government in protest.

On July 23 this year, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee announced a hike in the honorarium for community Durga Pujas, increasing it to ₹85,000 per puja committee from ₹70,000 last year.

However, many committees have decided not to accept the grant in a bid to demand justice for the rape-murder victim and express solidarity with the massive protests that have erupted across the State since then.

One such puja committee is Uttarpara Shakti Sangha, located in Uttarpara in Hooghly district. Prosenjit Ghosh, the secretary of the committee, told *The Hindu* that their decision to refuse the government's grant was not to oppose or support any particular political organisation. "We cannot accept the grant until the culprits are found and duly punished. This is our way of taking social responsibility for the cause and demanding justice for the victim," he said.

While Uttarpara Shakti Sangha was one of the first Durga Pujas to announce their rejection of the grant, Highland Park Utsav Committee in South Kolkata, Apanader Durga Puja in Hooghly's Uttarpara Jayakrishna Street and Bethuadahari Town Club in Nadia district soon followed suit.

Sajal Ghosh, a BJP councillor from Baranagar and puja organiser at one of the major north Kolkata Durga Pujas at Santosh Mitra Square, also called upon puja committees in the city to return the ₹85,000 honorarium offered by the State government.

Puja supporters

However, many Durga Puja enthusiasts, organisers and other clubs across the city opposed a boycott.

"This festival helps create livelihood for lakhs of people. We condemn the R.G. Kar incident, we want justice for the victim, but that has nothing to do with the Durga Pujas," Saswata Basu, general secretary of Forum for Durgotsab, told *The Hindu*.

Debasish Kumar, Trinamool MLA from Rashbehari constituency and one of the organisers of the Tridhara Sarbajanin Durgotsav festival, told local media, "Bengal is in a state of unrest, people who will benefit by proving this are calling for the Durga Puja boycott. But Bengalis know that this festival is an emotion in itself."

HC issues notices to accused, CBI after Dabholkar's daughter challenges order of acquittal

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

Narendra Dabholkar

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday issued notices to all the accused and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) while hearing a petition filed by Mukta Dabholkar challenging a sessions court judgment acquitting three persons accused of killing her father and rationalist Narendra Dabholkar.

On May 10 this year, a sessions court in Pune had convicted two accused, Sachin Andure and Sharad Kalaskar, sentencing them to life imprisonment in the murder case. However, three others, Virendrasinh Tawde, Sanjeev Punalekar, and Vikram Bhave, were acquitted of charges, including criminal conspiracy under the Indian Penal Code, and terrorist acts under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, and the Arms Act. The judgment came after a trial that lasted nearly three years.

Ms. Mukta's plea contended that the sessions court order failed to consider evidence that "establishes beyond reasonable doubt" a larger conspiracy involving all the accused. She argued against the order of acquittal citing sufficient material produced by the probe agencies.

"It is a settled law that extrajudicial confessions, if voluntary and truthful, can be sufficient evidence to base conviction of the accused, even if it is not corroborated by additional independent evidence," the plea stated.

The petition also said the sessions court failed to appreciate that in such cases, "where several people are involved in criminal acts for a common object, availability of direct evidence is rare".

Advocate Abhay Nevagi, for Ms. Mukta, contended that "the killing was a well-planned murder involving a larger conspiracy".

Dabholkar, 69, was shot dead on August 20, 2013 while on a morning walk in Pune. His murder sparked widespread outrage and led to a prolonged investigation and trial.

A Division Bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Prithviraj K. Chavan has posted the matter for further hearing on September 23.

Puja Khedkar's 'fraud' affected chances of other aspirants, UPSC tells Delhi HC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Puja Khedkar

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) on Wednesday opposed an anticipatory bail plea by former IAS probationer Puja Khedkar before the Delhi High Court saying she "committed a fraud against the commission and the public".

Earlier, the court had granted interim protection from arrest to Ms. Khedkar, who has been accused of fraudulently clearing the UPSC exam by wrongly availing of OBC and disability quota benefits, till August 21. On Wednesday, the court extended her interim protection from arrest till August 29, the next date of hearing.

The Delhi police also sought dismissal of the pre-arrest bail plea on the ground that any relief to her would hinder their probe into the "deep-rooted conspiracy" and that the case has wider implications on public trust as well as the integrity of the civil services examination.

'Interrogation needed'

In its reply filed in court, the UPSC said Ms. Khedkar's custodial interrogation was necessary to unearth the magnitude of the "fraud" that could not have been committed without the help of other individuals. Therefore, her pre-arrest bail plea should be dismissed, it said.

"The gravity of the fraud committed is unprecedented in nature having been committed against not only a constitutional body – the complainant – whose traditions are untrammelled and unparalleled but also against the public at large, including the citizens of this country who have utmost faith in the credibility of the UPSC as well as persons who could not be appointed despite being duly eligible and qualified due to illegal means employed by the applicant to seek appointment," the reply stated.

The court told Ms. Khedkar to respond to the stand of the UPSC as well as the Delhi police.

The Delhi police, in their status report, asserted that investigation had revealed that she was not entitled to benefits as an "OBC+Non-Creamy Layer" candidate, but she hatched a conspiracy with other persons to get that benefit by showing that her parents were divorced.

The circumstances, however, suggest that Ms. Khedkar's parents were living together, and that she had made a false declaration with respect to her previous number of attempts while writing the Civil Services Examination (CSE)-2021 under a changed name, the Delhi police said.

"She had already exhausted all the permissible attempts available to a PwBD (Person with Benchmark Disabilities)+OBC candidate, i.e. nine attempts by CSE-2020 itself. Therefore, as per CSE Rules, she was not eligible to appear further for CSE-2021 and subsequent CSEs," the police said in the status report.

"Despite exhausting all the permissible attempts, she appeared in CSE-2021, CSE-2022, and CSE-2023 by intentionally changing her name and making incorrect or false statements regarding the number of attempts already availed of and suppressing material information that she was duty-bound to furnish true and correct," the status report stated.

Bengal govt. hikes bonus for civic police volunteers

Shiv Sahay Singh
KOLKATA

In the face of widespread protests over the rape and murder of a doctor at Kolkata's R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital in which the prime accused is a civic police volunteer, a government notification on Wednesday called for an increase in the bonus for civic police volunteers.

According to the notification from the Home Department, the ad hoc bonus for civic volunteers and village police volunteers has been increased from ₹5,300 to ₹6,000 for 2023-2024.

The development assumes significance as questions have been raised about the engagement of civic police volunteers who have no accountability. There are over one lakh civic police volunteers and village police volunteers in the State.

Concern over T.N. panel advice on school kitchens

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Better option: Nearly 27% of the workers at the noon-meal centres in schools belong to SC/ST communities.

Experts including economists, academics and activists have written to Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, expressing concerns about one of the recommendations of the one-man committee headed by retired Madras High Court judge Justice K. Chandru, on replacing on-site cooking of noon meal for school students with centralised kitchens.

The State government constituted the committee headed by Justice (Retd) Chandru in the wake of an incident at Nanguneri in Tirunelveli district in August 2023, in which two schoolchildren belonging to the Scheduled Castes were brutally assaulted by a group of students from an intermediate caste.

After a study, Justice Chandru submitted his report to Mr. Stalin on June 18 this year. The report recommended that the Tamil Nadu government prohibit students in schools from wearing coloured wristbands, rings, or forehead marks that may indicate their caste and ensure removal of caste appellations in the names of schools.

One of the other recommendations of the report calls for establishing centralised kitchens at block level with adequate staff for its operation and a distribution network attached to school noon-meal centres, instead of having kitchens in every school.

Experts expressed "deep concerns" about this recommendation. In a joint letter to Mr. Stalin, development economist Jean Drèze, researcher S. Chella Rajan, nutritionist Sylvia Karpagam, economist Reetika Khera, Tiruvallur Congress MP S. Sasikanth Senthil, activists Prince Gajendra Babu, Karuna Muthiah and T. Ramakrishnan, said in some States, the functioning of centralised kitchens, particularly in rural areas, were not up to the mark.

'Process accountable'

"When food is cooked in the noon-meal centres located within school premises, teachers, students and parents can monitor the cooking activities and the process is accountable. But in the case of centralised kitchens, there is a less chance of public accountability," they said.

According to them, establishing centralised kitchens will incur additional expenses such as transportation of cooked food to schools and creation of cold storage facilities to store raw materials. If the distribution network is not proper, the food will not reach the schools on time and there are high chances of food wastage. Contractors of centralised kitchens will focus on making profits rather than supplying quality food to students, they said in the letter.

Cooking food at noon-meal centres in schools generates employment, particularly for women. Nearly 27% of the noon-meal workers belong to SC/ST communities. Centralising food preparation will create adverse effects, rather than solving their problems, the experts said.

ABVP seeks action against M.P. school over Pakistani flag in play

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Workers of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), RSS's student wing, staged a protest in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam on Wednesday over the use of the Pakistani flag in a play during the Independence Day celebrations at a school by kindergarten students.

They demanded action against the school administration, including an FIR and the cancellation of its affiliation.

Another outfit, Bal Kalyan Samiti, raised the matter with the District Education Officer, alleging that the school was "running anti-national activities by giving Pakistani flag to children on August 15".

"We have heard their concerns and will take any action after gathering the relevant evidence and seeing the video. We will also take statements from school administration," Additional Superintendent of Police, Ratlam, Rakesh Khaka told *The Hindu*.

In an over-seven-minute video of the musical play seen by *The Hindu*, a group of 14-15 small children depicted the story of India's freedom struggle. While most children waved the Indian flag, one child showed the Pakistani flag for about 15 seconds with a background narration about Partition and terming it a price for the nation's independence.

Meanwhile, the school took down the video from its social media pages and expressed regret if "anyone's sentiments have been hurt". "... in the said program only a small drama of the story of India's independence was staged," the statement on its Facebook page read.

A police officer who negotiated with the protesters said anybody who has a concern with the play should first see the video. "These are kindergarten children and they are actually glorifying India and its independence struggle. Someone may have shared an edited clip of the play and made allegations," the officer said.

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Stalin orders SIT to probe assaults at fake NCC camp

Five of the six fake trainers and four employees at the Bargur school have already been arrested

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin holding a meeting with senior officials of the government in Chennai on Wednesday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Chief Minister M.K. Stalin on Wednesday ordered the constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the sexual assault on students by fake National Cadet Corps (NCC) trainers at a private school in Bargur in Krishnagiri district.

The Chief Minister held a meeting with Chief Secretary N. Muruganandam, Director-General of Police/ Head of Police Force Shankar Jiwal, and other senior officials on Wednesday.

According to a press release, Inspector-General of Police (Establishment) K. Bhavaneeswari will head the SIT, which will probe the case registered at the Bargur all-women police station under the provisions of the POCSO Act. The police had already arrested five out of the six fake NCC trainers who were involved in the sexual assault, and four persons from the school management for hushing up the crime.

It had come to light that the arrested fake NCC trainers had also conducted camps in a few schools and colleges. Inquiries were under way to establish if they were involved in any crime in those institutions, the press release said.

The Chief Minister also ordered the formation of an eight-member multi-disciplinary team (MDT) with a mandate to take measures for the welfare of the victims and their parents, investigate the circumstances that led to the incident, and make suitable recommendations to prevent such incidents in future.

Officials from the Social Defence, School Education and Police Departments, psychiatrists, and Child Welfare Committee members are also on the MDT.

Mr. Stalin gave directions that the investigation must be completed within 15 days, and the chargesheet filed within 60 days.

HC to hear Sanjay Singh's bail plea in U.P. case today

Confirming that it would hear Aam Aadmi party leader Sanjay Singh's bail plea on Thursday, the Allahabad High Court said on Wednesday that he need not surrender before a Sultanpur court in connection with a case registered against him over a street protest in 2001, for which Mr. Singh and five others were convicted in 2023. PTI

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JNUSU hunger strike: V-C refused all our demands, says union

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The strike entered its tenth day. FILE PHOTO

As the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union's (JNUSU) indefinite hunger strike entered its tenth day, students on Wednesday said the Vice-Chancellor of the university had, after stopping by the protest, refused to accede to any of their demands.

In a purported video of the incident, Ms. Pandit could be heard telling the protesting students, "I am requesting you to end this strike. It makes me feel bad. Even I come from a backward class and I know the struggle that you had to face to reach here..."

The union had presented a charter of demands to the university's administration, which included the reinstatement of the in-house entrance exam which was in use before the Common University Entrance Test was introduced. It also demanded the reopening of Barak Hostel, more merit-cum-means scholarships, the reinstatement of the Gender Sensitisation Committee Against Sexual Harassment, and the revocation of the Chief Proctor Office Manual, which slaps stringent fines on protesting students.

The union said in a statement that it was informed by Vice-Chancellor Santishree D. Pandit that "there were no funds" for issues pertaining to hostels or increased scholarships. "We demand that our V-C take a principled position in favour of our demands as the head of the institution, and demand more funds from the Ministry of Higher Education," the statement read.

COL RAJENDER SINGH CHAUHAN SENA MEDAL (POSTHUMOUS) (09 APR 1956 TO 21 AUG 2000)

This day, the "Triple Centurions" remember IC-35159K Col RS Chauhan, SM (Posthumous) 21 RR (GUARDS), made the supreme sacrifice while displaying conspicuous gallantry in the highest traditions of the Indian Army while combating terrorists on **21 Aug 2000** in Handwara, Jammu & Kashmir. An epitome of fearlessness, his supreme sacrifice inspires the "Triple Centurions" to uphold the values of valour and sacrifice in the Service of the Nation.

Col Rajiv Kumar, Commanding Officer, and all Ranks of 21 Rashtriya Rifles (GUARDS).

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER: PWD: BUILDING: ASSAM, CHANDMARI: GUWAHATI–3.

No. 525638/10

PRESS NOTICE (RE-TENDER)

The Spl. Chief Engineer, P.W.D. Building (Health & Education), Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati– 3 on behalf of the Governor of Assam, invites bids in electronic tendering system (e-tenders) through Engineering, Procurement and Construction, (EPC-I) mode of contract (Single stage two-part bidding system) from eligible contractors registered with Assam Public Works Department (Building & NH) or Contractors registered with other State/ Central Government Departments, Institutions, Undertaking and Authorities having experience in similar nature of work, for the following works (including Routine Maintenance for four years from the completion of defect liability period):

Sl. No	Group No.	Name of work	District	Estimated value		Total Bid Value (including GST@18%) (Rs. in Lakhs)	Completion Period (Months)	Bid Security	Cost of Bid (In Rs.)
				Construction (Rs. in Lakhs)	Maintenance (Rs. in Lakhs)				
1	Gr-8	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Charaideo District i) Mahmora Deepling H.S. School (ii) B.P. Barua Memorial H.S.School	Charaideo	1316.64590	27.02967	1343.67557	14	2% of Bid value for General category and 1% of Bid Value for reserved Category	20,000
2	Gr-10	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Dhemaji District i) Sissimukh Higher SecondarySchool. (ii) Chimenmukh Tribal Higher Secondary School	Dhemaji	1320.38013	25.54976	1345.92989	14	-Do-	20,000
3	Gr-16	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Golaghat District i) Rajabari H.S. School (ii) Chungajan High School	Golaghat	1312.20573	27.02961	1339.23534	14	-Do-	20,000
4	Gr-17	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Golaghat District i)Town Hindi High School (ii) Chinatolly H.S. School (iii) Garumara H.S. School	Golaghat	1970.52868	40.54444	2011.07312	15	-Do-	20,000
5	Gr-18	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Jorhat District i) Sarojini Devi Uccha Madhyamic Vidyalya (ii) Madhab Deb Seminary High School.	Jorhat	1316.64590	27.02967	1343.67557	14	-Do-	20,000
6	Gr-19	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school Buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Jorhat District i) Bongshi Gopal HighSchool (ii) Kakojan Boys' High School	Jorhat	1316.64590	27.02967	1343.67557	14	-Do-	20,000
7	Gr-28	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school buildings under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Lakhimpur District (i) Narayanpur H.S. School (ii)Lakhimpur Collegiate H.S. School (iii) Sonari Chapori Tribal High School	Lakhimpur	1980.57254	38.32469	2018.89723	15	-Do-	20,000
8	Gr-29	Infrastructure Development of 65 Secondary Schools for construction of new school building under NESID-OTRI Scheme in Majuli District (i) JengraimukhH.S. School	Majuli	579.03555	13.51482	592.55037	12	-Do-	11,900

The Bid price may vary at the time of detail tendering for which no claim will be admissible.
All terms and conditions will be as per the Bidding Documents. The Press Notice will be a part of the Bidding Documents.
The Work will be allotted only after receiving Government approval.
Details of the bid may be seen at website i.e. https://www.assamtenders.gov.in from 10.00 Hrs, 27-08-2024.

For Spl. Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Building), Assam, Health & Education
Chandmari, Guwahati-3

Janasanyog /C/2325/ 24/22-Aug-24

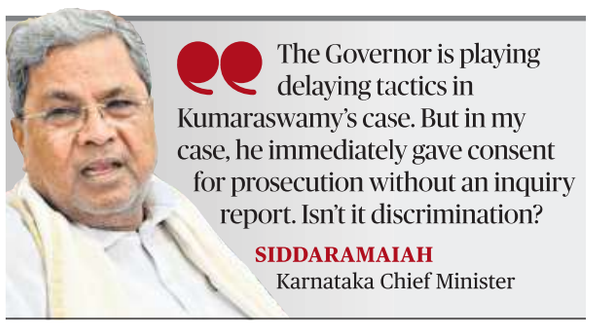
Karnataka ready to arrest Union Minister in graft case: Siddaramaiah

Lokayukta seeks permission from Governor to prosecute Kumaraswamy; Janata Dal(S) leader alleges that the Congress government is trying to settle political scores with him, says his signature has been forged on mining lease document

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI/BENGALURU

With the Special Investigation Team of the Lokayukta seeking permission from the Governor to prosecute Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy in a case of illegal approval of a lease for iron ore mining by the then State government led by him in 2007, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said his government would not hesitate to arrest the Janata Dal(S) leader, if need be.

Fielding questions from presspersons in Koppal on the SIT's action, he, however, said an arrest was not yet warranted. "Mr. Kumaraswamy is scared that the Governor may give sanction to prosecute him. The SIT of Lokayukta had submitted the investigation report to the Governor and sought his consent to prosecute Mr. Kumaraswamy. Since the Governor took no action, the SIT has again submitted its application now," he said.



The Chief Minister's statement paved the way for a political slugfest with Mr. Kumaraswamy wondering why he should be scared of arrest and remarking that it would need hundred Siddaramaiahs to arrest him. Mr. Siddaramaiah responded to this, saying, "Just a constable is enough to arrest Mr. Kumaraswamy and there is no need for Siddaramaiah to arrest him. The Governor is playing delaying tactics in Kumaraswamy's case. But in my case, he immediately gave consent for prosecution without an inquiry report. Isn't it discrimination?"

'Signature forged'

Mr. Kumaraswamy alleged that the Congress government was trying to settle political scores with him by taking up the alleged mining lease scam related to Sri Sai Venkateshwara Minerals, and said his signature had been forged on the documents related to the mining lease only to fix him in the case.

"The allegation is that when I was Chief Minister in 2007, I favoured Sai Venkateshwara and collected ₹150 crore from the mine owners. The fact is I have not made the allotment to the company. Till now, there has been no mining in the area as the Central government has not given them permission. There has been no loss to the State exchequer. How can the SIT seek permission from the Governor for prosecution in this case? I am not the one who will be scared with these tactics. I will fight it out legally," Mr. Kumaraswamy said at a press conference in Bengaluru.

Cash-for-vote case: top court refuses pleas to probe Naidu

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to entertain petitions challenging a High Court decision to quash a plea to investigate Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu in the 2015 cash-for-vote case.

The State High Court had given Mr. Naidu relief in a December 2016 order by dismissing the plea filed by YSR Congress Party leader Alla Ramakrishna Reddy on the ground that the latter had no *locus standi* to move the court in the case.

The cash-for-vote case involves an alleged attempt by Telugu Desam Party leaders to bribe nominated lawmaker, Elvis Stephenson, ahead of MLC polls.

Kiran Choudhry files RS bypoll papers; JJP rebels extend support

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini with BJP leader Kiran Choudhry at the State Assembly in Chandigarh on Wednesday. PTI

Press Trust of India
CHANDIGARH

BJP leader Kiran Choudhry on Wednesday filed her nomination papers for the Rajya Sabha bypoll from Haryana, with some Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) rebel MLAs also extending support to her candidature.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, State BJP president Mohan Lal Badoli, several party MLAs, the party's State co-incharge Biplab Kumar Deb and some JJP rebels were among those who accompanied Ms. Choudhry when she submitted her papers. Wednesday was the last day for filing nominations for the bypoll.

The BJP named Ms. Choudhry as its nominee shortly after she resigned from the Assembly on Tuesday, nearly two months after she switched over from the Congress.

She represented the Tosham seat in the Haryana Assembly.

Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda had earlier said his party would not field a candidate for the Rajya Sabha seat as it did not have the numbers.

Though the BJP has numbers on its side, with the Opposition unlikely to field a candidate, Ms. Choudhry appears set to enter the Upper House unopposed.

Speaking to reporters after Ms. Choudhry filed her nomination, Mr. Saini said apart from the BJP MLAs, some legislators from other parties have also extended support to her candidature.

"(JJP rebels) Jogi Ram Sihag, Ram Niwas Surjakhera, Ram Kumar Gautam and Anoop Dhanak, (Independent MLA) Nayan Pal Rawat and (Haryana Lokhit Party chief) Gopal Kanda have given their support letter," he said.

In response to a question, Mr. Saini said the party was unanimous over Ms. Choudhry's candidature. She has a long experience in politics and has a vision for the State, he said.

The bypoll for the lone RS seat in Haryana was necessitated after Congress leader Deepender Singh Hooda was elected to the Lok Sabha from Rohtak.

'Systemic changes needed in Malayalam film industry'

S.R. Praveen
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The release of the K. Hema Committee report on issues in the Malayalam film industry has kindled debates on what the Kerala government's response should be.

In an interview to *The Hindu* on Wednesday, film editor and Women in Cinema Collective (WCC) member Bina Paul says the focus should be on bringing in systemic changes in the industry to ensure that women can work with full confidence that they are respected as professionals.

"A lot of people have gone and deposed before the committee after they were promised confidentiality. We really don't know how many of them would want to take it forward legally. But, we don't want to only stress the instances of sexual harassment. There are many other issues related to film sets which we are hoping the government will take note of and act upon," she says.

In March 2022, the WCC achieved a major victory

Bina Paul

when the Kerala High Court, in response to its plea, ordered that the Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) as per the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 be formed in film sets. Since the formation of the WCC in 2017 and the submission of the Hema Committee report in 2019, things may have improved a bit in the sets, but much more needs to be done, feels Ms. Paul.

"Systems must be put in place to ensure proper contracts and facilities for everyone including technicians, junior artistes and dancers. Issues faced by women, for instance during menstruation time, are not even thought of during shooting. Regarding ICCs, it could be true that they may not work properly at the moment because of power structures. There needs to be monitoring committees to see how effectively they are working," she says.

The Hema Committee report notes that a huge barrier exists for women, whose numbers are less in the technical side of cinema. In the K.R. Narayanan film institute, there were just two women in the technical departments. Ms. Paul, one of the earliest women technicians in Malayalam cinema, says it was a bit scary in the early days being the only woman on the sets.

"Now, with this report, we don't want it to be seen as a bad industry in which fewer women come into work. We need to have steps to build up trust in the industry. The moment the presence of women increases, there will be a huge difference... We need more women in cinema who know what their rights are," she says.

Congress warns govt. of street agitation if it fails to act on findings of Hema Committee report

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) on Wednesday warned the Kerala government of aggressive street agitations if the administration "continued to callously disregard" the damning findings of the K. Hema Committee which catalogued scores of instances of sexual exploitation and gender discrimination in the Malayalam film industry.

Speaking to reporters here, Leader of Opposition V.D. Satheesan condemned the government for "forsaking its constitutional obligation of upholding the law by bringing the wrongdoers to book". He said Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had sat on the incriminating report for nearly five years. The government gave short shrift to the harrowing testimonies of scores of women artists and technicians who braved heavy personal and professional odds to depose before the committee.

Digital evidence

Mr. Satheesan said the distressing statements ran into hundreds of pages. Many had submitted digital evidence of their ordeals in the entertainment industry. However, the government chose to look the other way to shield influential and moneyed cabals that supposedly controlled the cinema and serial industry.

V.D. Satheesan

"Now, Mr. Vijayan wants the aggrieved women to relive their ordeal in public. The government had promised action only if any person who deposed before the committee preferred a police complaint. At the same time, the administration remained mum on the heap of evidence at its doorstep," Mr. Satheesan said.

Mr. Satheesan accused Mr. Vijayan of lying to the public by falsely stating that the Hema Committee had cautioned the government against publicising the report or initiating legal action based on its findings.

'To save exploiters'

Mr. Satheesan said a close reading of communications between the government and the committee showed otherwise. "The committee had advised the government to protect the identity of the persons who deposed before the panel and to follow the guidelines set by the Supreme Court in the Vishakha and others vs State of Rajasthan case in 1997 regarding sexual harassment at the workplace. It did not forbid the government from acting on its findings. The administration precluded itself from initiating prosecution to save the exploiters," he said.

Mr. Satheesan said the committee had recorded instances of child abuse. "The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act states that concealing offences against children was punishable by imprisonment. Mr. Vijayan and the Culture Minister were privy to the crimes chronicled by the Hema Committee. However, they did not act and have invited legal jeopardy on themselves," he said.

Siddaramaiah seeks Centre's approval to increase height of Almatti dam; to meet PM

The Hindu Bureau
BELAGAVI

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has urged the Centre to clear the decks for increasing the height of the Almatti dam over the Krishna river.

"In its second award, the Justice Brijesh Kumar Krishna River Water Disputes Tribunal has allocated 130 tmcft of additional water to Karnataka. To utilise this, we should increase the dam height to 524.25 metre from the present 519.6 metre. Land acquisition, rehabilitation and resettlement is estimated to cost around ₹1 lakh crore. However, work can start only after the Centre issues the notification. We have already met the Prime Minister and the Ministers concerned with this request. We will meet them again," he said at Almatti.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy CM D.K. Shivakumar take part in a thanksgiving ritual at the Krishna in Almatti .

"The Centre should hold a meeting of all the riparian States – Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, and Telangana – to resolve differences," the Chief Minister said.

Kerala Health Department issues alert against mpox

The Hindu Bureau
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The Kerala Health Department has issued an alert against mpox (known earlier as Monkeypox) with the World Health Organisation last week declaring that the outbreak in many African nations now has to be considered a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

The Health Department said on Wednesday that the State had formulated a Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) in 2022 itself when the disease was first reported in Kerala.

As directed by the guidelines issued by the Centre, surveillance teams have been deployed in all airports in the State and those returning from countries where mpox has been reported should report to the health authorities if they develop symptoms, a statement issued by the Health Department said.

Mpox came into limelight in 2022, in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kerala reported two cases of mpox in March this year.

The disease, caused by a virus of the same family as small pox, is transmitted through close skin-to-skin contact, sexual contact and through very close interaction with the infected person.

First batch of elephants begins journey to Mysuru to take part in Dasara festivities

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The first batch of nine caparisoned elephants that will take part in the Mysuru Dasara festivities in October began their journey from the Veeranahosahalli gate on the outskirts of the Nagarahole Tiger Reserve to the city on Wednesday.

Signalling the countdown to the Dasara celebrations, the elephants led by 58-year-old tusker Abhimanyu, who is slated to carry the golden howdah during the *Jamboo Savari*, embarked on 'Gajapayana' – the stately march from the jungle camps to the city of palaces.

The event where the elephants were accorded ceremonial reception was witnessed by a large number of people, as the occasion set the ball rolling for the celebrations that commence from October 3.

Traditional ceremony: Elephants start from Veeranahosahalli gate in Nagarahole Tiger Reserve. PTI

With the mahouts on their back, the elephants marched a distance before boarding separate trucks for Mysuru.

All nine jumbos arrived here traversing a distance of 70 km and are camping at the Aranya Bhavan campus.

The elephants will enter the palace on August 23.

Court restrains TDB from building new pond at Sabarimala

The Hindu Bureau
KOCHI

A Division Bench of the Kerala High Court on Wednesday restrained the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) from proceeding with the construction of a new *Bhasmakulam* (pond) at Sabarimala until further orders.

The Bench comprising Justice Anil K. Narendran and Justice P.G. Ajithkumar passed the interim order in a *suo motu* case registered in connection with the proposed construction of the new *Bhasmakulam*.

When the petition came up for hearing, the Bench orally observed that the decision to construct a new pond had been taken without consulting the High Court high-power committee constituted for the implementation of the Sabarimala master plan. The TDB could not take a decision in the matters relating to developments in Sabarimala on its own.

The court said a lot of devotees were visiting Sabarimala. Therefore, before deciding on any new proposal in matters relating to Sabarimala, the TDB should consult the Sabarimala special commissioner and the high-power committee. It directed the TDB to file an affidavit in the case before September 11.

बिहार सरकार

योजना एवं विकास विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल, गोपालगंज

निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या –13 SBD/2024-25 E-Tender

(केवल ई–टेन्डरपद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.पद पर)

बिहार के राज्य पाल महोदय की ओर से बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम/अन्य राज्य सरकार/केन्द्र सरकार /सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम या राष्ट्रीय या अंतरराष्ट्रीय ख्याति के किसी भी एजेंसी में समुचित श्रेणी में निबंधित संवेदकों से प्रतिशत दर निविदा दोबीड प्रणाली (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यदि संवेदक बिहार राज्य के किसी कार्य विभाग/निगम में पूर्व से निबंधित नहीं है, तब एकरारनामा के पूर्व निम्नलिखित कार्य का स्वीकारपत्र (लेटर ऑफ एक्सेपटेंस) प्राप्त होने के बाद बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम (जिसमें निबंधन की प्रक्रिया लागू हो) में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा।

1. कार्यों की विवरणी :

ग्रुप संख्या	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विपत्र की राषि (लाख रू0 में)	अग्रधन की राषि (ऑन लाईन मोड या ऑफलाईन मोड में केवल B.G. के रूप में) (लाख रू0 में)	परिमाण–विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	बीड प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क (अप्रत्यर्पणी यकेवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि (माह में)
01.	02	03	04	05	06	07
1	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत विजयीपुर प्रखण्ड के गौरा पंचायत अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन गौरा का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
2	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत बैकुण्ठपुर प्रखण्ड के प्यारेपुर पंचायत अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन प्यारेपुर का निर्माण कार्य।	309.632	6.193	10000	5900	14 माह
3	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत भोरे प्रखण्ड के रकबा पंचायत अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन रकबा का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
4	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत भोरे प्रखण्ड के डोमनपुर पंचायत अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन डोमनपुर का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
5	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत मांझा प्रखण्ड के पुरैना पंचायत अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन पुरैना का निर्माण कार्य।	309.632	6.193	10000	5900	14 माह
6	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत कुचायकोट प्रखण्ड के सासामुसा अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन सासामुसा का निर्माण कार्य।	309.632	6.193	10000	5900	14 माह
7	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत बरौली प्रखण्ड के सरफरा अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन सरफरा का निर्माण कार्य।	309.632	6.193	10000	5900	14 माह
8	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत बैकुण्ठपुर प्रखण्ड के हकाम अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन हकाम का निर्माण कार्य।	309.632	6.193	10000	5900	14 माह
9	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत उचकागॉव प्रखण्ड के जमसड अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन जमसड का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
10	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत उचकागॉव प्रखण्ड के महैया अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन महैया का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
11	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत विजयीपुर प्रखण्ड के भरपुरवा अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन भरपुरवा का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
12	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत विजयीपुर प्रखण्ड के मुसेहरी अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन मुसेहरी का निर्माण कार्य।	265.261	5.305	10000	3500	14 माह
13	गोपालगंज जिला अंतर्गत बरौली प्रखण्ड के सलेमपुर पूर्वी अंतर्गत पंचायत सरकार भवन सलेमपुर पूर्वी का निर्माण कार्य।	309.632	6.193	10000	5900	14 माह

2. विज्ञापन निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक–19.08.202
3. निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की प्रारम्भिक की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 09.09.2024 को 10.00 बजे पूर्वाहन से। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
4. प्री–बीडमीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक 11.09.2024 समय 03:30 बजे,अपराहन, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, विश्वेश्वरैया भवन, चतुर्थ तल, कमरा नं0–423, बेली रोड, पटना–800015
5. निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 20.09.2024 समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
6. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 20.09.2024 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न से। (कंडिका 5 में उल्लेखित अंतिम तिथि से दो कार्य दिवस के पश्चात् की तिथि)। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www .eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
7. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषित की जायेगी। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
9. निविदा की वैधता अवधि : 120 दिन (निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि के बाद)
10. विज्ञापन दाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल गोपालगंज।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन,
कार्य प्रमंडल, गोपालगंज

PR. No. 006411 (Planning) 2024-25

विस्तृत जानकारी **www.state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar** से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

THE HINDU
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बिहार सरकार

योजना एवं विकास विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल–02 बखरी, बेगूसराय

अति अल्पकालिन पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या – 08/SBD/2024–25

(केवल ई–टेन्डर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

बिहार के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम/अन्य राज्य सरकार/केन्द्र सरकार /सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम या राष्ट्रीय या अंतरराष्ट्रीय ख्याति के किसी भी एजेंसी में समुचित श्रेणी में निबंधित संवेदकों से प्रतिशत दर निविदा दो बीड प्रणाली (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यदि संवेदक बिहार राज्य के किसी कार्य विभाग/निगम में पूर्व से निबंधित नहीं है, तब एकरारनामा के पूर्व निम्नलिखित कार्य का स्वीकार पत्र (लेटर ऑफ एक्सेपटेंस) प्राप्त होने के बाद बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम (जिसमें निबंधन की प्रक्रिया लागू हो) में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा।

1. कार्यों की विवरणी : –

ग्रुप संख्या	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विपत्र की राशि (लाख रू0 में)	अग्रधन की राशि (ऑन लाईन मोड या ऑफ लाईन मोड में केवल B.G. के रूप में) (लाख रू0 में)	परिमाण–विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	बीड प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि (माह में)
01.	02	03	04	05	06	07
01	बेगूसराय जिला अन्तर्गत बलिया प्रखण्ड अन्तर्गत ताजपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	295.03461	5.90100	10000	As per e-proc	14 माह
02	बेगूसराय जिला अन्तर्गत बलिया प्रखण्ड अन्तर्गत रहाटपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	291.90436	5.83900	10000	As per e-proc	14 माह
03	बेगूसराय जिला अन्तर्गत चेरियाबरियारपुर प्रखण्ड अन्तर्गत चेरियाबरियारपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	249.25846	4.98600	10000	As per e-proc	14 माह

2. विज्ञापन निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक – 16.08.2024
3. निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की प्रारम्भिक तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 27.08.2024 को 10.00 बजे पूर्वाहन से। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
4. प्री–बीड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक 29.08.2024 समय .03:30 बजे, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, विरवेश्वरैया भवन, चतुर्थ तल, कमरा नं0–423, बेली रोड, पटना–800015
5. निविदा अपलोड की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 02.09.2024 समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
6. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 03.09.2024 समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न से। (कंडिका 5 में उल्लेखित अंतिम तिथि से दो कार्य दिवस के पश्चात् की तिथि)। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
7. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषित की जायेगी। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
9. निविदा की वैधता अवधि : 120 दिन(निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि के बाद)
10. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन प्रमण्डल, कार्य प्रमंडल– 02 बखरी, बेगूसराय

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट **state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar** पर देखी जा सकती है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन,
कार्य प्रमंडल–02 बखरी, बेगूसराय

PR. No.006301 (Planning) 2024-25

नशे से बनानी दूरी है, क्योंकि परिवार जरूरी है।

HIMACHAL PRADESH
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer, Palampur Division, HPPWD, Palampur on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh, invites the Percentage rate bids, in electronic tendering system from the eligible class of contractors registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table:-

Sr. No.	Name of work	Estimated Cost	Starting Date for downloading Bid.	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Deadline for submission of Bid.	Time limit
1.	Post DLP Maintenance of Banuri to Saliana road under PMGSY Incentive Km 0/00 to 4/500 (SH:- Providing and laying Tack coat 25 MM thick bitumimous concrete, Hot applied Thermoplastic and Routine Maintenance for five years)	1,18,34,160.00	24.08.2024 From 11.00AM	2,37,0000.00	31.08.2024 Upto 5.00PM	Six Months

The Technical bid will be opened on 03.09.2024 at 11.30 AM. The bidders are advised to note other details of tenders from the department website WWW.hptenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer,
HPPWD, Division, Palampur
PIN-176061, Tel. 01894-230561,
e-mail:-ee-pal-hp@nic.in
On behalf of Governor of H.P.

HP / 1573/24-25 **HIM SUCHNA AVAM JAN SAMPARK**

बिहार सरकार

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

भवन निर्माण विभाग

भवन प्रमंडल बांका

अति अल्पकालीन राष्ट्रीय स्पर्द्धा ई–निविदा

पुर्नआमंत्रण सूचना सं0–03 (SBD) वर्ष 2024–25

1. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता भवन प्रमंडल, बांका।
2. निविदा आमंत्रण की तिथि : दिनांक 16.08.2024
3. परिमाण–विपत्र (डाउनलोड करने) की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 24.08.2024 से 09.09.2024 को 15:00 बजे तक।
4. निविदा प्राप्ति (अपलोड करने) की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय: दिनांक 24.08.2024 से 10.09.2024 को 15:00 बजे तक।
5. प्रीबीड मिटिंग की तिथि, समय एवं स्थान : (क) दिनांक 28.08.2024 को 15:00 बजे अधीक्षण अभियंता, भवन अंचल, भागलपुर कायार्लय कक्ष में।
: (ख) दिनांक 02.09.2024 को 15:00 बजे मुख्य अभियंता (द0, भ0नि0वि0 बिहार पटना के कायार्लय कक्ष में।
6. निविदा खोलने (तकनीकी बीड) की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 12.09.2024 को 15:00 बजे।
7. वित्तिय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : तकनीकी बीड अनुमोदन पश्चात्
8. परिमाण विपत्र बिक्री का स्थान : वेबसाईट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
9. निविदा प्राप्ति का स्थान : वेबसाईट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
10. निविदा वैद्यता की अवधि : 120 दिन
11. निविदा स्वीकृत करने वाले पदाधिकारी का पदनाम एवं पता सक्षम प्राधिकार
कार्य की विवरणी

क्र0 सं0	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विपत्र की राशि (रू0 में)	अग्रधन राशि (रू0 में)	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य (रू0 में)	बिड प्रोसेसिंग चार्ज सेवा कर सहित	कार्य समाप्ति की अवधि
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Construction of 4 Nos of Panchayat Sarkar Bhawan At Khadihara, Sabalpur, Laudiya Khurd, & Gordhabar Panchayat in Barahat Block Under Banka District	10,16,77,000.00	20,17,000.00	10000.00	As per eproc2	12 Month
2	Construction of 5 Nos of Panchayat Sarkar Bhawan At Karsop, Warsawad, Gulni Kushaha, Biranudha & Parmanandpur Panchayat in Shambhuganj Block Under Banka District	12,70,97,000.00	22,71,000.00	10000.00	As per eproc2	12 Month

विस्तृत जानकारी **state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar/ www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in** से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

PR- 006341 (BCD) 2024-25

कार्यपालक अभियंता
भवन प्रमंडल, बांका

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

बिहार सरकार

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

भवन निर्माण विभाग, भवन प्रमंडल छपरा

राष्ट्रीय स्पर्द्धा ई0– निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना

ई0निविदा संख्या –09(S.B.D)/भ0प्र0छपरा/2024–25

1. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता :–**कार्यपालक अभियंता, भवन प्रमंडल, छपरा**
2. निविदा आमंत्रण की तिथि :– दिनांक–16.08.2024
3. परिमाण विपत्र बिक्री (डाउनलोड की)अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :– दिनांक–03.09.2024 से 23.09.2024 को 03:00 बजे
4. निविदा जमा करने (अपलोड करने) की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय :– दिनांक –24.09.2024 को 03.:00बजे अप० तक।
5. निविदा खोलने (तकनीकी बीड) की तिथि एवं समय :– दिनांक –25.09.2024 को 03.:30बजे अप० तक।
6. वित्तीय विड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय :– तकनीकी बीड निष्पादन के बाद।
7. निविदा (परिमाण विपत्र) बिक्री, प्राप्ति एवं खोलने का स्थान :– वेबसाईट (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)
8. प्रिबीड मिटिंग :– (1) की तिथि समय एवं स्थान :– दिनांक 10.09.2024 को 12:30 बजे अधीक्षण अभियंता, भवन अंचल, छपरा का कार्यालय।
(2) की तिथि समय एवं स्थान (क्र०सं० 1 एव 2 के लिए) :– दिनांक–17.09.2024 को 12:30 बजे मुख्य अभियंता, उ० उपभाग, भवन निर्माण विभाग, बिहार, कार्यालय। पटना का
9. निविदा वैधता की तिथि :– 120 दिन।
10. **कार्य विवरणी**

क्रम सं0	कार्य का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि (रू0 में)	अग्रधन की राशि (रू0 में)	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य (रू0 में)	बीड़ प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क	कार्य अवधि
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत बनियापुर प्रखंड के हरपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
2	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत मढौरा प्रखंड के मुबारकपुर एवं सलिमापुर में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधि ठापन कार्य सहित)	6,10,00,000.00	12,20,000.00	10000.00	As per website	12 माह
3	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत मशरख प्रखंड के खजुरी एवं दुर्गोली पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	6,10,00,000.00	12,20,000.00	10000.00	As per website	12 माह
4	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत मॉझी प्रखंड के बंगरा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
5	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत परसा प्रखंड के बलिगॉव पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
6	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत सोनपुर प्रखंड के गोपालपुर, भरपुरा, एवं चतुरपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	9,15,00,000.00	18,30,000.00	10000.00	As per website	12 माह
7	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत सोनपुर प्रखंड के सबलपुर पश्चिमी एवं सबलपुर पूर्वी पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधि ठापन कार्य सहित)	6,10,00,000.00	12,20,000.00	10000.00	As per website	12 माह
8	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत सदर छपरा प्रखंड के जलालपुर में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
9	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत दरियापुर प्रखंड के पिरारीडिह पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
10	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत नगरा प्रखंड के खैरा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
11	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत अमनौर प्रखंड के खिपुरा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
12	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत सोनपुर प्रखंड के जहॉगीरपुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधि ठापन कार्य सहित)	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
13	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत गड़खा प्रखंड के श्रीपाल बंसत, एवं मोतीराजपुर में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	6,10,00,000.00	12,20,000.00	10000.00	As per website	12 माह
14	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत सदर छपरा प्रखंड के तेनुआ में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित)	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
15	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत दरियापुर प्रखंड के खानपुर में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
16	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत मशरख प्रखंड के डुमरसन में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
17	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत मॉझी प्रखंड के घोरहट में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह
18	छपरा जिलान्तर्गत सदर छपरा प्रखंड के लोहडी में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य (विधुतीकरण एवं स्वच्छता जलापूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य सहित	3,05,00,000.00	610000.00	10000.00	As per website	09 माह

विस्तृत जानकारी के लिए वेबसाईट **https://state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar /https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in** पर देखा जा सकता है।

PR- 006334 (BCD) 2024-25

कार्यपालक अभियंता
भवन प्रमण्डल, छपरा

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

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Online Applications are invited from eligible candidates for the filling up of vacant one post of **Assistant Professor in Journalism and Mass Communication** under General Ex-Servicemen category in the University. For further details, please visit the University Website: **www.hpuniv.ac.in.** The candidates may visit online portal **www.recruitment.hpushimla.in** for filling up/ uploading the online application form w.e.f. **22.08.2024**. The last date for online submission of application is **10.09.2024**. **Registrar**

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कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल–02,बेनीपुर (दरभंगा)

पुनर्निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या –04(SBD)/24-25

(केवल ई–टेन्डर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

बिहार के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम/अन्य राज्य सरकार/केन्द्र सरकार /सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम या राष्ट्रीय या अंतरराष्ट्रीय ख्याति के किसी भी एजेंसी में समुचित श्रेणी में निबंधित संवेदकों से प्रतिशत दर निविदा दो बीड प्रणाली (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यदि संवेदक बिहार राज्य के किसी कार्य विभाग/निगम में पूर्व से निबंधित नहीं है, तब एकरारनामा के पूर्व निम्नलिखित कार्य का स्वीकार पत्र (लेटर ऑफ एक्सेपटेंस) प्राप्त होने के बाद बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम (जिसमें निबंधन की प्रक्रिया लागू हो) में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा।

1. कार्यों की विवरणी : – **दरभंगा जिला अन्तर्गत विभिन्न प्रखंडवार पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।**

ग्रुप संख्या	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विपत्र की राशि (लाख रू0 में)	अग्रधन की राशि (ऑन लाईन मोड या ऑफ लाईन मोड में केवल B.G. के रूप में) (लाख रू0 में)	परिमाण–विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	बीड प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि (माह में)
01.	02	03	04	05	06	07
1	दरभंगा जिला अन्तर्गत कुशेश्वरस्थान पूर्वी प्रखंड के सुघराईन पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	320.49	6.41000	10000.00	According to eproc2 web page	14 माह
2	दरभंगा जिला अन्तर्गत कुशेश्वरस्थान पूर्वी प्रखंड के उजुआ सिमरकोटा पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	320.73	6.41500	10000.00	According to eproc2 web page	14 माह

2. विज्ञापन निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक –**17.08.2024**
3. निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की प्रारम्भिक की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक **05.09.2024** को 10.00 बजे पूर्वाहन से। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
4. प्री–बीड मीटिंग का समय, स्थान एवं तिथि : दिनांक **30.08.2024** समय 3:30 बजे, मुख्य अभियंता का कार्यालय, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, विश्वेश्वरैया भवन, चतुर्थ तल, कमरा नं0–423, बेली रोड, पटना–800015
5. निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक **11.09.2024** समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
6. तकनीकी बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक **13.09.2024** समय 3.30 बजे अपराह्न से। (कंडिका 5 में उल्लेखित अंतिम तिथि से दो कार्य दिवस के पश्चात् की तिथि)। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
7. वित्तीय बीड खोलने की तिथि एवं समय : सक्षम पदाधिकारी द्वारा बाद में घोषित की जायेगी। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
8. निविदा खोलने का स्थान : www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर
9. निविदा की वैधता अवधि : 120 दिन(निविदा प्राप्ति की अंतिम तिथि के बाद)
10. विज्ञापनदाता का पदनाम एवं पता : कार्यपालक अभियंता, स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन प्रमण्डल, कार्य प्रमंडल–02 बेनीपुर।

विस्तृत जानकारी **state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar** से प्राप्त की जा सकती है।

कार्यपालक अभियंता
स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन
कार्य प्रमंडल–02,बेनीपुर

PR- 006457 (Planning) 2024-25

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार

बिहार सरकार

योजना एवं विकास विभाग

कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय

स्थानीय क्षेत्र अभियंत्रण संगठन, कार्य प्रमंडल–02, महनार

अल्पकालीन पूर्ननिविदा आमंत्रण सूचना संख्या –03(SBD)/2024-25

(केवल ई–टेन्डर पद्धति के अनुसार वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)

बिहार के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम/अन्य राज्य सरकार /केन्द्र सरकार/सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र के उपक्रम या राष्ट्रीय या अंतरराष्ट्रीय ख्याति के किसी भी एजेंसी में समुचित श्रेणी में निबंधित संवेदकों से प्रतिशत दर निविदा दो बीड प्रणाली (तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय) अन्तर्गत आमंत्रित किये जाते हैं। यदि संवेदक बिहार राज्य के किसी कार्य विभाग/निगम में पूर्व से निबंधित नहीं है, तब एकरारनामा के पूर्व निम्नलिखित कार्य का स्वीकार पत्र (लेटर ऑफ एक्सेपटेंस) प्राप्त होने के बाद बिहार राज्य के किसी भी कार्य विभाग/निगम (जिसमें निबंधन की प्रक्रिया लागू हो) में निबंधन कराना अनिवार्य होगा।

1. कार्यों की विवरणी : –

ग्रुप संख्या	कार्य का नाम	परिमाण विपत्र की राशि (लाख रू0 में)	अग्रधन की राशि (ऑन लाईन मोड या ऑफ लाईन मोड में केवल B.G. के रूप में) (लाख रू0 में)	परिमाण–विपत्र का मूल्य (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	बीड प्रोसेसिंग शुल्क (अप्रत्यर्पणीय केवल ऑनलाइन मोड में भुगतान) (रूपये में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि (माह में)
01	02	03	04	05	06	07
01	पातेपुर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत डढुआ पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	298.82533	5.97700	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
02	पातेपुर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत मरूई पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन निर्माण कार्य।	301.83187	6.03700	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
03	बिदुपुर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत कथौलिया पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	296.08435	5.92200	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
04	राजापाकर प्रखंड अन्तर्गत राजापाकर प्रखंड के राजापाकर दक्षिणी पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य	299.56453	5.99129	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
05	वैशाली जिला अन्तर्गत जन्दाहा प्रखंड के मानसिंहपुर विझरौली पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	299.44623	5.98900	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
06	वैशाली जिला अन्तर्गत पातेपुर प्रखंड के मौदह चतुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.49360	5.95000	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
07	वैशाली जिला अन्तर्गत बिदुपुर प्रखंड के रहिमापुर पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	293.12684	5.86300	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
08	वैशाली जिला अन्तर्गत राघोपुर प्रखंड के सैदाबाद पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	296.90835	5.96800	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
09	वैशाली जिला अन्तर्गत राघोपुर प्रखंड के जफराबाद डीह पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	298.39183	5.96800	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह
10	वैशाली जिला अन्तर्गत राघोपुर प्रखंड के रामपुर श्यामचंद पंचायत में पंचायत सरकार भवन का निर्माण कार्य।	297.40286	5.94900	10000.00	As per eproc 02 website	14 माह

2. विज्ञापन निर्गत करने की तिथि : दिनांक 17.08.2024
3. निविदा कागजात अपलोड करने की प्रारम्भिक की तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 02.09.2024 को 10.00 बजे पूर्वाहन से। (सिर्फ वेबसाईट www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
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5. निविदा अपलोड करने की अंतिम तिथि एवं समय : दिनांक 09.09.2024समय 3.00 बजे अपराह्न तक। (सिर्फ वेबसाईटwww.eproc2.bihar.gov.in पर)
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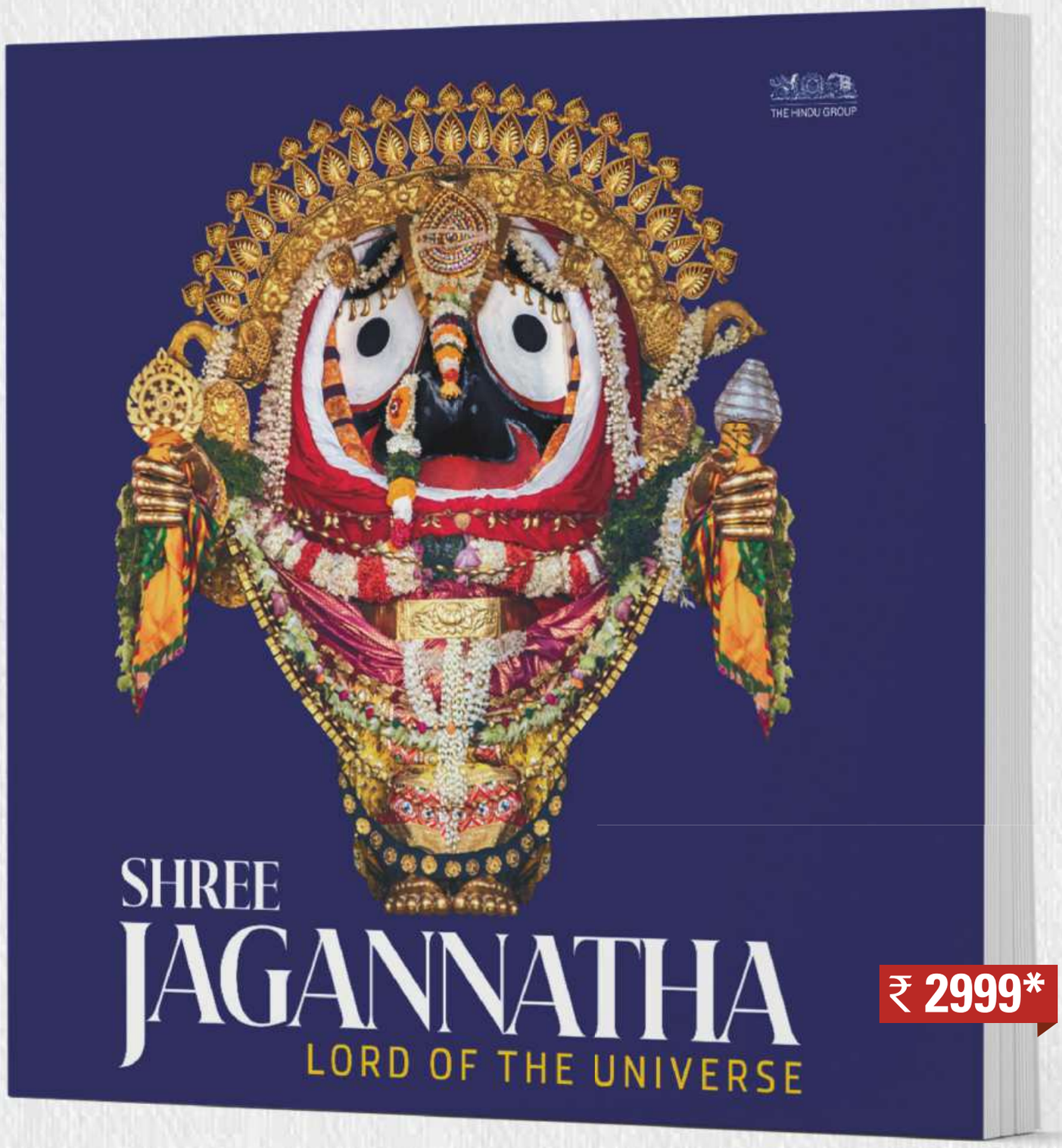

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Double brake

Struggling with anti-incumbency, BJP faces a resurgent Congress in Haryana

The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Haryana is leaving no stone unturned to fight back a resurgent Congress, as the State is scheduled to have a single-phase Assembly election on October 1 for all 90 seats. The attempts of the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) to retain its position as a third player, and of the Aam Aadmi Party to emerge as one, continue, though a sharp polarisation between the two national parties appears likely. The BJP has to tackle double anti-incumbency as it has been in power in both the State and the Centre for the last 10 years. Cognisant of the headwinds, the BJP replaced then Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar with Nayab Singh Saini, in March ahead of the general election. Mr. Saini has been trying to pacify various interest groups, by reversing many decisions of his predecessor and announcing new schemes. Sarpanches who are up in arms over the curtailing of their rights have got their expenditure limit increased for the gram panchayats from ₹5 lakh to ₹21 lakh. He has organised special camps, or 'Samadhan Shivirs', to address people's grievances; and 1.20 lakh contractual employees have been ensured job security until the age of superannuation. The creamy layer annual income for Other Backward Classes, that was reduced to ₹6 lakh by Mr. Manohar Lal Khattar, has been restored to its level of ₹8 lakh. A 10% horizontal reservation for Agniveers in various State government posts, and an expanded minimum support price regime for crops have been promised.

Haryana's fundamental social cleft between Jats and non-Jats had worked to the BJP's advantage in the last two Assembly elections. But the multi-caste alliance behind the BJP had begun to weaken by the 2019 Assembly election, with the farmers' agitation and the Agnipath scheme undermining it further in the last five years. Additionally, the party is caught in numerous rivalries within the tent. The party's majority in the Assembly itself is questionable. The Congress hopes to cash in on all this and turn around its own fortunes. Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, who is helming the Congress campaign, appears to have consolidated the party behind him. His focus is on unemployment and the crisis in the agricultural sector. The Congress still has the task of ensuring that its factional leaders remain united until the end. Communal polarisation, though at its lowest in the last 10 years, can still wreck the party's plans. Despite a decline, the BJP managed to avoid a total rout in the Lok Sabha election. The Congress and the BJP shared the 10 Lok Sabha seats equally, while the Congress increased its vote share across the State. The outcome in Haryana will have implications for the Congress and the BJP at the national level.

Power play

Hydropower projects must factor in the environmental costs too

While Wayanad in Kerala limps back to normal life after the devastating landslide last month, a landslide on Tuesday in Sikkim caused damage to six houses and a building of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) at its Teesta-5 hydropower station in Gangtok. There is no comparison of the impact of the event in both places, as there was no loss of lives or injuries reported in Sikkim. However, the cause for concern is that this is the second natural-disaster-led assault on a hydropower project along the Teesta. A deluge from the South Lhonak glacier in North Sikkim last October washed away the Chungthang dam that was critical to the Teesta-3 power station (which is not operated by the NHPC). The Teesta-3 (1,200 MW) power project was the largest hydroelectric power project in the State until it was effectively grounded after the outburst. Only a tenth of the power originally being supplied by the project is now available. The Teesta-5 project, at 510 MW, has also been made non-functional since the glacial lake outburst.

The disaster shines a new light on an old, but never quiescent, conundrum posed by hydropower projects. From initial proposals nearly three decades ago to have 47 power projects along the run of the Teesta in Sikkim and West Bengal, only five projects exist and about 16 are in various stages of consideration. A tributary of the Brahmaputra, the Teesta river originates from the Tso Lhamo Lake at an elevation of about 5,280 metres in north Sikkim. The river travels for about 150 km in Sikkim and 123 km in West Bengal, before entering Bangladesh from Mekhliganj in Cooch Behar district; it flows another 140 km in Bangladesh and joins the Bay of Bengal. In theory, the river's course through undulating terrain is what tempts governments to extract as much benefit as possible for power projects. Through the decades, several companies have bid for projects auctioned out by State governments but the process has rarely been without complications. It has been a complicated exercise in balancing the environmental risks, costs of properly insuring for those risks, public perception and aiming for profit. In the case of the Teesta-3 project, reports have emerged that the developers, in order to save on costs, built a concrete-faced rock fill dam as opposed to a concrete gravity dam – one reason why it was completely washed away. Environmental impact assessments of hydropower projects in the region must give a clear estimate of the actual costs involved. This will not only bolster public faith in these projects but also be environmentally sustainable.

Moral pressure and human rights compliance

Shelley Walia

has taught Cultural Theory at Punjab University

As is commonly recognised, there are two ways in which compliance with human rights norms can be enforced. One approach is the enforcement of economic sanctions or military invasion. This is only possible in the case of powerful nations. The other strategy is through forceful condemnation which can be undertaken by non-governmental organisations or smaller nations, irrespective of their military or economic power or their lack of adequate international clout.

Though the practice of state sovereignty puts up barriers to the implementation of international human rights standards, moral pressure against the governments guilty of violating human rights sometimes succeeds in nudging them to step back. But mostly, it is seen that authoritarian regimes such as the dispensation of Vladimir Putin in Russia, Xi Jinping in China or Kim Jong-un in North Korea completely ignore the pleadings of various governments, many of whom, in reality, have their own political and economic agenda in disingenuously taking the moral high ground of an anti-war or a liberal narrative.

Impact of naming and shaming

However, Rochelle Terman, a scholar on human rights, in her recent study, 'The Geopolitics of Shaming: When Human Rights Pressure Works' – and When It Backfires' (Princeton 2024), places the idea of locating shaming in strategic contexts, thereby exploring the success of publicly identifying and condemning those guilty of human abuse. Naming and shaming, as well as the genuine intentions of lending full support to the victims have, in many instances, worked out positively as a deterrence to further violations.

Innumerable political occasions across the world corroborate the impact of naming and shaming in endorsing human rights accountability and reforms. Such campaigns, it was seen, resulted in exerting significant pressure on governments to improve their human rights records – as in the case of Myanmar and Ethiopia – leading to the release of political prisoners.

Similarly, in Columbia and Argentina, naming and shaming had a tangible impact on policy deviations to address human rights apprehensions. Dictators such as Augusto Pinochet of Chile, Slobodan Milošević from Serbia, Charles Taylor from Liberia, and Alberto Fujimori from Peru have been prosecuted for crimes against humanity after a worldwide censure of their tyranny was established. Across cultures, both traditional and modern, the violence against marginalised ethnic groups or LGBTQ individuals have led to augmented safeguards and appreciation of basic human rights. Campaigns against such perpetrators have visibly led to increased access to justice and reparations for victims of human rights abuses.

Though naming and shaming efforts often fail, with some guilty governments resisting or denying allegations, or making only cosmetic changes, unrelenting pressure and activism does contribute to greater culpability over time. For example, in the case of Israel, universal endorsements have had negligible impact on the leadership to comply with the demands of recognised human rights institutions which promote and monitor violations. But student agitations across the world against the genocide in Palestine or, more recently, against the dictatorship in Bangladesh are indisputably acts of dissent resulting in exerting moral pressure on the Zionist lobby or on the idea of religious nationalism that often leads to authoritarianism. Such campaigns have often led to increased international scrutiny and demands for human rights improvements. It is disheartening that many nations remain bystanders, or disallow student agitations to suit their right-wing affiliations.

> There is a need to establish the undeniable centrality of human rights in a rapidly changing world that is facing prejudice and fanaticism

Conundrum in international law

The moot question, therefore, before us is to interrogate if the strategy of using "naming and shaming" is effective. Though a powerful tool of moral pressure that puts a country such as China, Russia, Israel or Syria in the spotlight, and condemns violations and urges reform, a conundrum in international law continues to smoulder. For example, when Amnesty International asks you to endorse a petition on behalf of a political dissident in China, or the United Nations issues a resolution convicting state violence in Syria, it amounts to shaming. Or when Russia is banned from participating in the Olympics, it becomes an international act of humiliating the violator. But what can such moral sanctions achieve when in many cases even military invasion or economic sanctions do not work?

Rather than merely exposing the violator on the global stage, one way out of the conundrum would be to ensure that human rights emerge from the inherent social and democratic institutions as well as from the innate national psyche. Human rights advocates must urge governments to build a bridge between power and law, concentrating steadfastly on popular appeals and democratic politics. The success of such an approach will depend on the intensity with which the illiberal forces are challenged by disallowing liberal ideas to be subverted.

Forces fighting for human rights must come to grips with the tendency to co-opt the forces of liberalism through a false rhetoric based on propaganda and deceptions used as trappings of manipulation for the furtherance of power, and buttressed by a sort of unconstitutional politics. Such a brand of hubris will stand vanquished when the impetus given to the growth of human rights and the furtherance of economic and social reforms disempowers the tyranny of the state.

Understandably, we live in a world beleaguered by prejudice and fanaticism, where authoritarian governments tyrannise their people, where free speech is denied with utmost insensitivity. The very dignity of the people is repudiated and their fundamental freedoms cramped.

The state and human rights

To restore the personal liberty of all and bring the guilty to justice within the ambit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, becomes the responsibility of the state. Such a call for the scrutiny of the various functions and policies of the state would hasten the advent of the question of human rights to the centre stage and usher in an environment of peace, tolerance and understanding. To achieve this, it is pragmatic that the state takes this task as binding and sacred. In case the state shows reluctance in patronising the cause of human rights, any kind of resistance activism would gain in its legitimacy, especially as a process of a critical, reflective and alert defence of the general public against state persecution or indifference.

Achievements and disappointments of implementing human rights are better understood within the context of liberal modernity where a repression-free state respects human rights without any bias or partiality so that rules of equal treatment stand at the forefront of its crucial concerns. This is possible when the interests of the prevailing parties in power cohere with the question of seeking human rights as fundamental to their political ideology and a zeitgeist underpinned by a conscience of a deep-rooted moral concern. The state would, therefore, need to establish stronger institutions that keep abreast of the democratic norms of protecting basic human rights, a moral and legal position based on ideologically-centered proclamations of norms and expositions.

It is imperative, therefore, to establish the undeniable centrality of human rights amidst the ever-increasing human-rights violations in a rapidly changing world, particularly in liberal systems which help to sustain full stability through generating public welfare in an egalitarian environment. To achieve this, a consolidation of the plausible foundation for human rights, of political coalitions, institutional arrangements, and political ideologies has to be mobilised as a strategy for achieving compliance and justice through holding culprits responsible. This centrality remains absent in North Korea or China, and now in many countries with right-wing governments across the world where the success of a political system depends not on purposeful prerequisite for rights, open-minded legality, or democratic culpability, but on the authoritarian ideological state apparatus geared to attain maximum power over the people.

After 'manifesto moment', budgetary disappointment

Anish Gawande

National Spokesperson, Nationalist Congress Party (Sharadchandra Pawar) and Founder, Pink List India

Following a "manifesto moment" in the lead-up to the 2024 general election where several major political parties pledged support for the LGBTQ+ community, the 2024 Union Budget has dashed the hopes of queer Indians yearning for recognition in national politics.

A transformative overhaul of the government's approach towards LGBTQ+ rights was never expected – especially given the Solicitor General's vehement opposition to marriage equality before the Supreme Court of India last year. Yet, the mention of transgender rights in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s own manifesto had sparked a glimmer of hope for progress under a Modi 3.0 government.

Instead, the LGBTQ+ community found itself reduced to a mere footnote in the Budget: the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment's allocation for "Comprehensive Rehabilitation for Welfare of Transgender Persons" under the Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise (SMILE) programme. This programme promises to fund *Garima Grahas* (shelter homes), scholarships, and the National Council for Transgender Persons.

Meagre funding for crucial programmes

On paper, the budgetary outlay for transgender welfare increased from ₹52.91 crore in FY24 to ₹68.46 crore in FY25. But a closer look reveals a harsh reality: actual expenditure was a meagre ₹22.82 crore in FY24. Nowhere is the impact of this discrepancy more starkly reflected than in the fact that most *Garima Grahas* have shut down over the past two years due to lack of funding, and the NCTP is barely functional.

With just a meagre increase for this financial year, who will fulfil the guarantee to build *Garima Grahas*, promised in the '*Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas*' section of the BJP's 2024 *Sankalp Patra*?

SMILE is not the only victim of the government's apathy. Even more troubling is the reduction in funding for the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) from ₹3,079.97 crore in FY24 to ₹2,892.00 crore in FY25.

> While political manifestos in the run-up to the 2024 general election offered the LGBTQ+ community some hope, allocations in the Union Budget spell despondency

NACO, tasked with both combating HIV/AIDS and preventing Sexually transmitted infections, plays a crucial role in public health. Despite decades of progress, India still faces one of the largest HIV epidemics in the world, with LGBTQ+ Indians at a higher risk of contracting the virus and facing distinct psychosocial challenges.

Today, over 2.4 million people in India live with HIV. Of those, almost 900,000 are not linked to treatment–and more than half a million are unaware they are even infected.

The last credible study by the National Aids Control Organization (NACO) in 2003 estimated that 6% of India's adult population was infected with STIs. The more recent National Family Health Survey (2019-21) highlighted that 23.3% of sexually active unmarried men between 15 and 29 had more than one sexual partner, with risky sex practices and lack of condom use prevalent in both urban and rural areas. What prompted the government to slash funding not only for HIV prevention but also the fight against STIs when we are staring at a potential public health crisis?

A denial of rights

The lack of budgetary allocation is not just about misplaced priorities or ideological differences. It is a systematic denial of the rights of millions of LGBTQ+ Indians, blocking their access to an equal share over the country's resources.

The numbers lay bare the reality. The 2011 Census counted 4.9 lakh transgender Indians. Even if we accept this disproportionately low figure, the 2024 Budget allocated a meagre ₹1,400 for the welfare of each transgender citizen. More realistic estimates suggest that the transgender population in India is around 1.22 crore, making this average allocation a pitiful ₹56 a person.

Young Indians, emboldened by recent court victories affirming that the Constitution of India protects every single Indian citizen regardless of gender or sexuality, need a government that creates safe spaces to ensure that they are not harassed or bullied in schools – one that provides inclusive mental health care to prevent rising suicide rates among young LGBTQ+ youth, and one that guarantees equal access to education and employment.

Political support helps

I hope that Members of Parliament from the Opposition parties, including my own party (the Nationalist Congress Party), which raised the demands of the LGBTQ+ community in their election manifestos, stand up for the rights of LGBTQ+ Indians in Parliament. I also hope – perhaps naively – that those in the government who got transgender rights included in the BJP's manifesto in the first place realise their missteps and work towards a shared vision of an inclusive future.

For too long, queer Indians have relied upon courts as guarantors of rights. As we navigate new political paradigms, it is important for the queer movement to build upon an impressive history of active political engagement – one that saw the Namdeo Dhasal march, in 1988, with trans women and sex workers from Kamathipura to the then Chief Minister Sharad Pawar's residence to demand protection from moneylenders and Shabnam Mausi being elected elected as India's first transgender MLA from Sohagpur in Madhya Pradesh in 1998.

Recent successes, such as the establishment of the transgender welfare board in Maharashtra in 2020 and the drafting of Tamil Nadu's LGBTQ+ policy in 2024, indicate that judicial progress results in executive action only when sustained by civil society pressure. We must take this lesson to heart, working not only with the Centre but also States and local bodies to ensure that rights recognised on paper are effectively implemented in practice.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Short-lived respect

I had interviewed a nurse who had worked during the COVID-19 pandemic — this was for a project, and recently — and she mentioned how the value of health-care professionals in the eyes of the public has increased. Fast forward a month or so, and the Kolkata trainee doctor case is all over the news. It made me wonder how short-lived our regard for the sacrifices of medical staff is. Also, if someone from an educated background is being denied justice despite wide coverage of the issue, it poses a serious question on the safety of women.

Besania,
Bengaluru

Workings of film industry

The much-awaited report of the Justice K. Hema Committee exposes the dark side of the (Malayalam) film industry. Matters such as the 'casting couch', 'adjustments' and 'compromises', which seemed to be rumours and an example of exaggeration, are now confirmed realities. It is even more shocking to know that even 'popular' and 'reputed' actors are involved in these cases. What is worse is the sad plight of junior artistes and other workers in the industry.

The report should help ensure the safety, the dignity and the well-being of women in the film industry as a whole.

M. Pradyu,
Thalikavu, Kannur, Kerala

World Mosquito Day

It is surprising that hardly any media outlet had articles or reports on August 20, 'World Mosquito Day'. There should have been extensive reports on the disease fight in India especially as the insect is among the world's deadliest creatures. Malaria, yellow fever, dengue and lymphatic filariasis still remain deadly diseases and linked to the mosquito. There needs to be data on the risks posed by mosquito-borne diseases.

Dr. Srinivas Rajagopal,
Suchindram, Tamil Nadu

Imports weaken Indian pharma

Biswajit Dhar
Distinguished Professor, Council for Social Development, New Delhi

K.M. Gopakumar
legal advisor and senior researcher, Third World Network

Chetali Rao
Consultant, Third World Network

Ensuring the affordability of pharmaceuticals is essential for controlling healthcare costs, especially in India, where out-of-pocket health expenditures accounted for nearly 47.1% of the total health expenditure in 2021. While the Drugs Price Control Order, 2013, aims to regulate the prices of existing medicines, a better option is to establish a competitive environment for critical medicines by promoting local production. However, the government has taken two initiatives to meet domestic requirements through imports, which could have a chilling effect on the domestic industry.

The first was a Department of Expenditure (DoE) order permitting the Ministry of Health to procure 120 medicines through global tenders to supply Union government schemes. This list includes several top-selling anti-diabetes medicines and anti-cancer drugs. Currently, the companies selling these medicines enjoy a market monopoly in India, largely due to patent protection, regulatory barriers, or both. Moreover, for over 40 of these 120 medicines, the DoE order specifies a specific brand to be procured, implying that monopoly control of foreign companies would be enhanced.

Secondly, the 2024-25 Union Budget proposed removing the 10-12% customs duty on three cancer medicines marketed by AstraZeneca, ostensibly to reduce their prices. Given that some of these medicines are priced extremely high, the proposed import duty reduction would contribute little towards making them affordable.

These measures could seriously disincentivise domestic producers, making the country dependent on imports. More importantly, they could reinforce two entry barriers faced by the domestic industry, namely, the product patent regime and the regulatory guidelines for marketing approval of bio-therapeutics.

New medicines are generally under patent protection, preventing Indian companies from producing affordable generics/biosimilars. Meanwhile, regulatory guidelines, which impose costly and time-consuming requirements for obtaining marketing approval of biosimilars, can adversely affect domestic producers. However, both these entry barriers can be overcome through proactive government action. The Patents Act has several public interest provisions which can be invoked to promote local production. Similarly, regulatory guidelines for marketing approval of bio-therapeutics can be suitably amended to reduce the burden on domestic companies.

Section 83 of the Patents Act states that "patents are granted to encourage inventions and to secure that the inventions are worked in India on a commercial scale and to the fullest extent that is reasonably practicable without undue delay" and that "they are not granted merely to enable patentees to enjoy a monopoly for the importation of the patented article". It also states, "Patents are granted to make the benefit of the patented invention available at reasonably affordable prices to the public". Substantive provisions enforce these key assertions, ensuring that while patent holders are guaranteed their rights under the Act, they cannot act in a manner that is prejudicial to the public interest.

If a patented medicine is "not available to the public at a reasonably affordable price," compulsory licences (CL) can be granted to any company willing to make the product in India. Issuing CL is the most effective remedy to ensure affordability of medicines but it was issued only once. This was when the originator company was charging nearly three lakh for a medicine. Using CL, an Indian company produced for ₹8,000. However, despite the high prices of medicines, the Patent Office has not issued CL for any other medicine. The government opposed granting CL even during the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in stark contrast to the stance of the U.S. government, which granted licences on multiple patents during the pandemic.

India's Patents Act also permits the granting of government-use licences. Section 100 states, "patents granted do not in any way prohibit Central government in taking measures to protect public health". Provisions under this section allow for the granting of government-use licences to enable domestic production of generic versions of patented medicines.

Biosimilar guidelines

The guidelines for marketing approval of biosimilars in India are not only obsolete but also resource and time-intensive. For instance, the current guidelines require mandatory animal studies, which are no longer necessary even in developed countries with stringent regulatory standards, including the U.S. and the EU. Further, the WHO guidelines and the U.K. guidelines, for biosimilar marketing approval, treat clinical trial requirements as an exception rather than a rule, whereas the Indian guidelines still insist on mandatory clinical trials. These requirements create another barrier for Indian producers. In a recent press release, the International Generic and Biosimilar Medicines Association stated that "savings in time and resources from eliminating these duplicative requirements could have a meaningful impact on patient access."

The proposed duty waiver on cancer medicines and global tendering for critical medicines undermine Parliament's directives to improve access and affordability of medicines through domestic production, using the provisions of the Patents Act. Reliance on imports could have a chilling effect on the pharmaceutical industry, weakening its ability to remain relevant. The government needs to review its recent decisions, but more crucially, align its policies to support the growth of the domestic pharmaceutical industry.

> Reliance on imports could have a chilling effect on the pharmaceutical industry, weakening its ability to remain relevant

Mamata's moment of reckoning

Tragedy at R.G. Kar has shaken public trust in Bengal Chief Minister's leadership

STATE OF PLAY

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Faced with one of the biggest challenges of her administrative career in containing the raging protests over the rape and murder of a doctor at R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital (RGKMCH), West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee did what she does best, which is hitting the streets. Many in the State could not fathom whom the Chief Minister was protesting against when anger was directed at her government. Even after 13 years in power, Ms. Banerjee has not been able to break free of her image as an Opposition leader, street fighter, and rabble-rouser.

As a Chief Minister of the fourth most populous State of the country, the people expected more from Ms. Banerjee than only hitting the streets in such a moment of crisis.

The rape and murder of a postgraduate trainee doctor not only reflects lapses on several fronts but also reveals a deep rot in the administration.

In the R.G. Kar incident, neither the hospital administration nor the police followed protocols. From informing the family that the doctor had died by suicide, to registering a case of unnatural death when injuries on the body of the victim *prima facie* pointed out sexual assault and murder, the hospital and police could have handled the situation better.

As anger simmered and women sought to reclaim the night on the eve of Independence Day, the Chief Minister said that 'Bangladesh style' protests were being organised by '*Ram Baam*' (Left and Right) to remove her from power. When the mob ransacked the RGKMCH in the early hours of August 15, the police deployed posed no resistance and some policemen even ran for cover inside the hospital.

The mob at the hospital was not the only mob that people of the State had seen recently. Weeks ago, when a couple was publicly beaten up by a local Trinamool leader in Chopra, a mob gathered and watched as the woman writhed in pain. Similar mobs turn violent during elections. Given that West Bengal has been a party-dominated society, such mobs have had the backing of the political system.

The accused in the horrific rape and murder is a civic police volunteer who had unrestricted access to both the hospital and its emergency wing. The system of civic police volunteers, where there is no scrutiny before appointment and minimal accountability, is a result of Trinamool Congress policies that promote contractual workers with allegiance to the ruling party.

Ms. Banerjee can no longer play the victim card and must take the onus of the administrative mess exposed by the R. G. Kar incident. This incident shook the people's faith in the country's only female Chief Minister.

Even before the outrage over the R.G. Kar incident, there had been several such incidents that raised questions about the security of women in West Bengal. The rape of a woman at Park Street inside a moving vehicle in 2012, the rape and murder of a college student at Kamduni in 2013, the gang rape of a tribal woman at Birbhum in 2014, and more recently rape and suicide of a teenager at Hanskhali in 2022, are instances where the CM could have come out of denial mode and put a proper mechanism in place.

But she and her administration remained busy patting their own back, celebrating how Kolkata recorded fewer crimes against women and was the safest city for women. These claims have fallen flat, as even the State government's advisory, meant to protect women working at night, suggests minimising night shifts for women.

The CM and her party leadership have to realise that populist policies can only help win elections, which should not be considered the end goal of democracy. They should invest in creating a sustainable society with equitable opportunities. In the absence of such opportunities, lumpensiation will rage across the State and mobs will take control of the streets.

The government should realise that populism has limits, a fact that is evident from certain clubs refusing financial grants offered by the government for organising Durga Puja in the aftermath of the gruesome crime.

The people of West Bengal take pride in celebrating Durga Puja, welcoming the female Goddess into their homes, neighbourhoods, and city. However, the torture meted out to the 31-year-old doctor at her workplace will not only haunt Bengali society this festival season but for many autumns to come.

Precedents show Centre can help fund Chennai Metro

With Chennai bursting at its seams, the Phase II project, while costly, is an urgent need to connect the city's outskirts with its centre

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy
Vignesh Radhakrishnan

The Phase-II of the Chennai Metro Rail has once again emerged as a bone of contention between the Centre and Tamil Nadu, with the Centre reiterating it as a "State-sector" project in a recent reply in the Lok Sabha.

In fact, the Public Investment Board (PIB) had recommended it as a 'central sector project' in August 2021, just months after the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam formed the State government. However, the Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has not approved it till now.

While the project is indeed cost-intensive, as the Centre had suggested many times in the past, data shows that the Centre's share is not a far cry from the funds sanctioned for Metros in other cities such as Bengaluru. Moreover, the project is a necessity as the population in the city's exteriors which are not connected by Metro is growing rapidly.

Chart 1 depicts the size and cost of various Metro projects – both completed and under construction. The three Metro projects in Chennai – Phase 1, Phase 1A and Phase 2 – are highlighted.

The chart shows the total route length in km for each project on the horizontal axis.

The cost in rupee crore is depicted along the vertical axis. Chennai Metro's second phase with a route length of 118.9 km is estimated to cost ₹63,246.4 crore, making it the costliest-ever Metro project undertaken in India.

That being said, a lion's share of the funding for Chennai Metro phase-II – 70% of the construction cost – is to be sourced as a loan from multilateral/bilateral agencies as shown in **Table 2** as per the recommendations of the PIB. The PIB had asked the Centre to pitch in ₹5,407.4 crore as equity (11% of the cost) and ₹2,017.5 crore as a loan (4%) to the project with the State giving similar amounts.

It is this 11% as equity (₹5,407.4 crore) and 4% as subordinate debt (₹2,017.5 crore) that the Centre has refused so far.

Chart 3 shows the Centre's sanctioned funds (as equity) for various Metro projects across six States.

As things stand today, the Centre has sanctioned ₹7,468 crore as equity for the three phases of the Bengaluru Metro combined, ₹12,550 crore for all phases of the Delhi Metro combined, compared with just ₹3,633 crore as equity for Phase 1 and 1A of the Chennai metro.

Even if the Centre agrees to release the funds recommended by the PIB for Phase-II, its share in Chennai Metro will go up to about ₹9,000 crore, close to ₹1,500 crore more than its share in Bengaluru Metro and still about ₹3,500 crore less than Delhi's.

Also, this amount does not need to be released by the Centre in one go and can be staggered across various years.

While it is true that Phase II is a costly venture, a look at the population growth in the city's outskirts shows that Chennai is bursting at its seams.

Map 4 shows the number of electors in various Assembly segments in and around Chennai in the 2011 State and 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

The number of electors in the Assembly segments near the city centre such as Egmore, Chepauk, Thousand Lights and T Nagar have grown at a snail's pace. In contrast, electors in segments far away from the centre such as Velachery, Sholinganallur, Alandur, Pallavaram, Madhuravoyal and Ambattur, have surged in the period.

Especially, the number of electors in Sholinganallur – one of the major areas not connected by Metro currently and will be in phase II – has skyrocketed from 3.5 lakh in 2011 to 6.6 lakh in 2024.

Costly, but feasible and necessary

The data were sourced from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Metro websites and the Election Commission

Chart 1: The chart depicts the size and cost of various Metro projects — both completed and under construction — across Indian cities

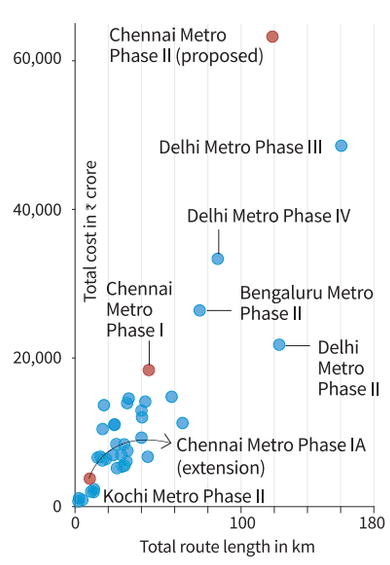
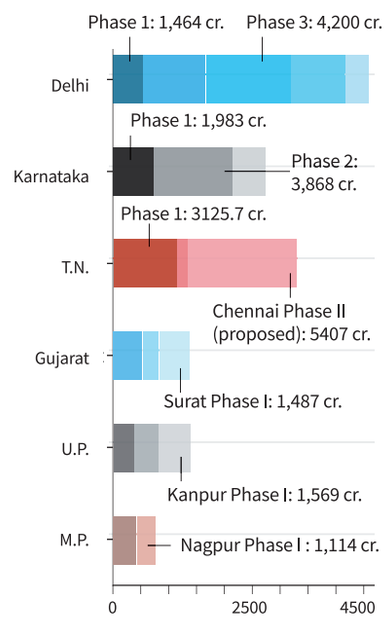


Chart 3: Centre's sanctioned funds as equity for various Metro projects across select States

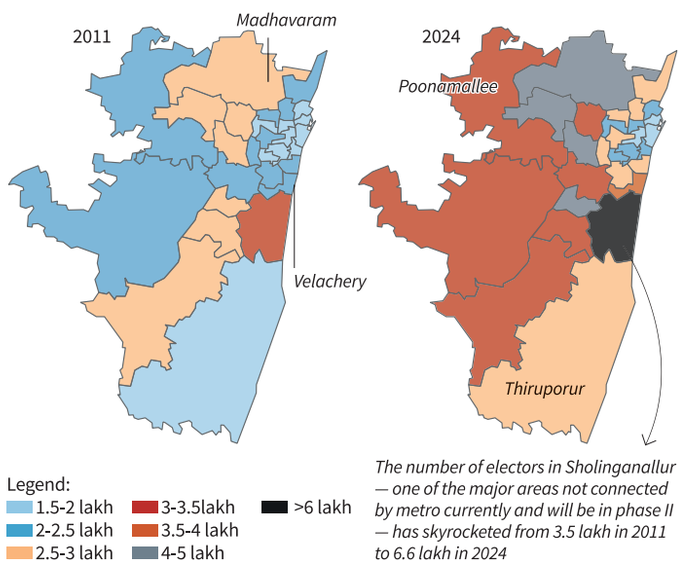


In the graph, each row corresponds to the Centre's allocation (equity) for various metros. Each rectangle corresponds to a metro project

Table 2: The table shows the funding pattern of Chennai Metro Rail Phase II as recommended by the Public Investment Board

Sources	Amount (in crore)	Percentage (%)
GoI: equity	5,407.4	11.2
GoI: subordinate debt	2,017.5	4.2
GoI: sub total	**7,424.9**	**15.4**
GoTN: equity	5,407.4	11.2
GoTN: subordinate debt	2,017.5	4.2
GoTN: sub total	**7,424.9**	**15.4**
Loan assistance from multilateral / bilateral agencies	33,593.5	69.2
Sub total	48,443.3	100
GoTN: Subordinate debt for land, resettlement and rehabilitation, State taxes and others	13,339.4	
GoTN: Interest during construction for loan and front end fee	1,403.7	
Total	63,246.4	

Chart 4: The map shows the number of electors in various Assembly segments in and around Chennai, in the 2011 State polls and the 2024 Lok Sabha polls



The number of electors in Sholinganallur — one of the major areas not connected by metro currently and will be in phase II — has skyrocketed from 3.5 lakh in 2011 to 6.6 lakh in 2024

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO AUGUST 22, 1974

London stock market slump casts gloom

London, August 21: The London Stock Market continues to fall and the market barometer yesterday was below the 200 level of the Financial Times share index. There are persistent rumours that it could fall by another 15 or 20 points which would mean that, taking inflation into account, the share prices' real value would be equivalent to the prices in the 20s.

The business community here is baffled by what is described as the incredible behaviour of the British stock market.

The pound has lost a lot of ground on foreign exchange markets, but foreign exchange dealers say the pound is only one of the number of European currencies which lost ground to the strengthening U.S. dollar.

It is believed that many deposits of Arab oil revenue in sterling are being switched to dollars. However, the scale of fall in share prices and the talk about financial institutions and industrial companies also contributed to the selling pressure on the pound.

There is anxiety in British Government circles that further pressure on the pound would have a progressive effect on import prices and thus on the British cost of living. British and European financial observers feel that the main hope for the pound and to a lesser extent other EEC currencies is that the strength of the dollar will persuade the U.S. Federal Reserve to relax its present tight money policies.

But the root cause of the incredible fall in the value of British shares and the pound is that investors, both local and foreign, feel convinced that the British Government is totally incapable of curbing the rate of inflation which is fast corroding the British economic structure.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO AUGUST 22, 1924

Bengal Council.

Calcutta, August 21: During the next session, the Bengal Legislative Council will devote 26th and 27th to official and 28th and 29th to non-official business. The Bengal tenancy Amendment Bill and Howrah Bridge Bill will be introduced by the Government. Two non-official Bills namely Bengal Fish Fry Preservation Bill and Calcutta Improvement Amendment Bill 1924 will also be introduced.

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of jobs generated by online vendors

15.8 in million. Out of this, 3.5 million jobs were created for women, according to a report prepared by prepared by Pahle India Foundation. It was launched by Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. PTI

Number of MPs and MLAs facing cases of crimes against women

151 According to the Association for Democratic Reforms, 16 of these MPs and MLAs have declared cases related to rape in their election affidavits. West Bengal tops the list with 25 MPs and MLAs facing charges related to crimes against women. PTI

Number of jobs generated in Tamil Nadu over last 3 years

31 in lakh. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M. K. Stalin declared that the State has garnered over ₹9 lakh crore in investments over the last three years. He also unveiled a slew of new projects worth ₹68,773 crore that would generate 1 lakh jobs in the State. PTI

Number of people killed in Gaza since October 7

40,223 The death toll includes 50 deaths in the Palestinian territory from August 21, according to the health ministry, which also listed 92,981 people as wounded in Gaza since October 7. AFP

Number of students who failed class 10, 12 exams in 2023

65 in lakh. According to Ministry of Education officials, the failure rate is higher in state boards than in central boards. The highest number of failures in class 12 exams were reported from Uttar Pradesh. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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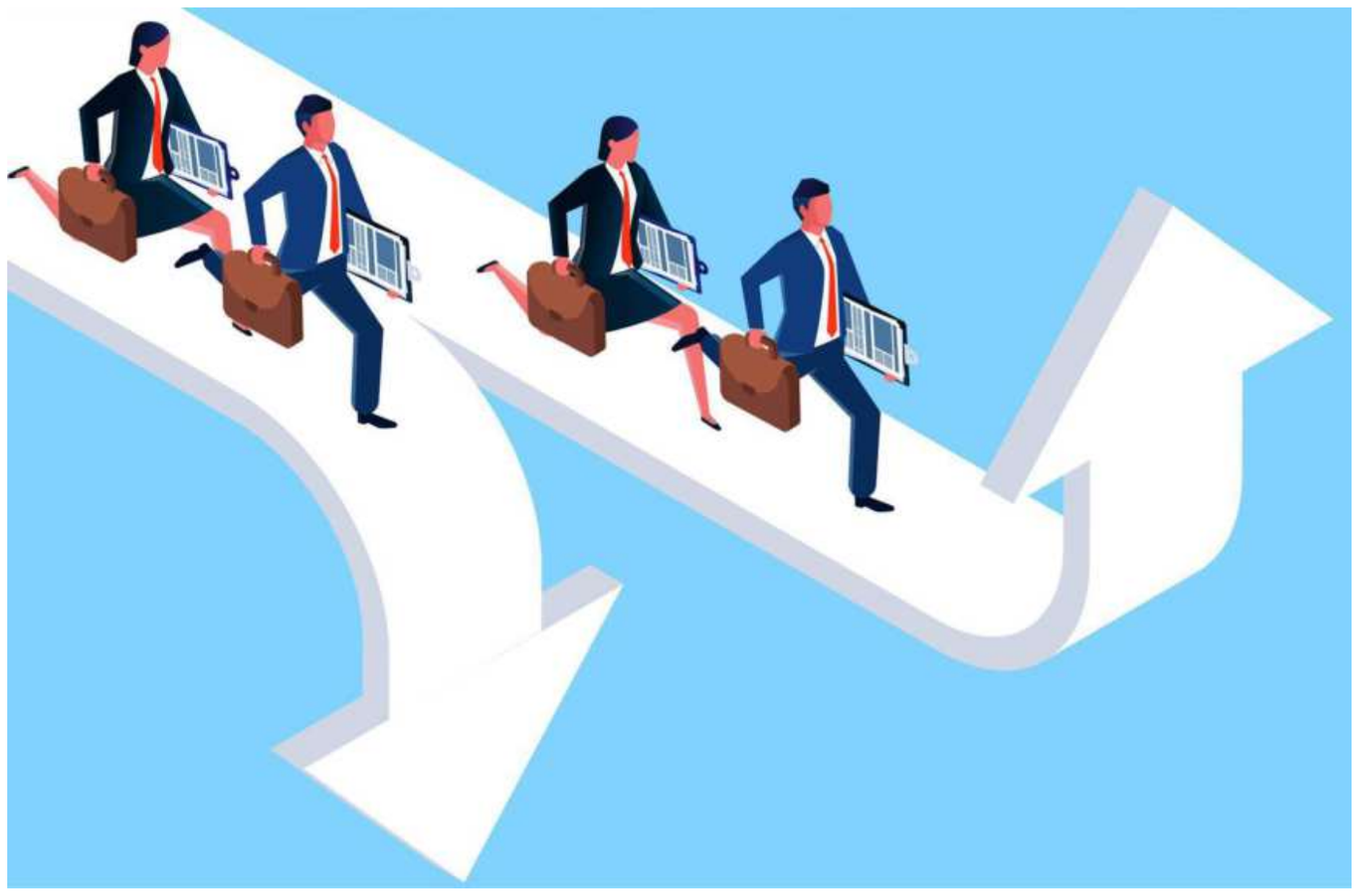
Were 8 crore new jobs created in three years?

Prime Minister Modi, based on the India-KLEMS database, claimed that India created "eight crore new jobs in the last three to four years". However, analysts are questioning the methodology used to estimate these numbers. They argue that little meaningful employment was created in these years

ECONOMIC NOTES

P. C. Mohanan
R. Ramakumar



GETTY IMAGES

Employment, or the lack of it, has been a major issue of debate among economists and policy makers in India in recent years. Recently, Prime Minister Narendra Modi claimed that India created "eight crore new jobs in the last three to four years". The Prime Minister was using data from the India-KLEMS database hosted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). As per this database, the total number of workers in India rose from 56.6 crore in 2020-21 to 64.3 crore in 2023-24, that is, a net rise by 7.8 crore workers. Tailing this claim, the research team of the State Bank of India (SBI) published a validating report that claimed a match between the total number of workers in the India-KLEMS database and in the NSSO's Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE), 2022-2023.

What lent an element of surprise to these claims was the rise in the number of workers over the two COVID-19 years and after. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), the employment-to-population ratio between 2019 and 2023 was stagnant, if not falling, in East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific. Given such trends elsewhere, analysts have had serious methodological and empirical suspicions in relying on the India-KLEMS database to posit an outlier status for India in employment creation.

The India-KLEMS project began as an academic exercise financed by the RBI in 2009. From 2022, the RBI hosts the database. KLEMS stands for Capital (K), Labour (L), Energy (E), Material (M) and Services (S). It is a framework used to measure industry-level "total factor productivity" (TFP), which is considered by mainstream economists as a measure of the efficiency of all the inputs to produce a unit of output.

In other words, the objective of the KLEMS framework is not to produce data on employment. The employment figures are merely inputs into the database's modelling framework. Further, the the RBI does not directly collect data on any input, including employment, that enter the India-KLEMS database. It sources sectoral data on employment, input usage and output from official sources, including the Central Statistics Office, Census of India, Annual Survey of Industries and the Periodic Labour Force Surveys (PLFS). It is amusing then that data sourced by the RBI from other official sources, and used as inputs to estimate TFP, are portrayed as "RBI jobs data" to make political statements on employment generation in the economy.

The method in India-KLEMS

India-KLEMS borrows employment data from the PLFS, but not as absolute figures of the number of workers. The PLFS provides only the share of workers in the population, or the Worker Population Ratio (WPR). To obtain the number of workers, the WPR is multiplied with the total population. This is where the problem begins, as there is no official population figure for India after 2011.

To obtain a population estimate for the intercensal years, demographers typically interpolate population numbers from the last available Census. But here, India-KLEMS adopted a strange solution. The estimates of population in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 were borrowed from the Economic Survey (ES), 2021-22. The ES projected these populations by assuming that population growth rates between 2001 and 2011 were the same for the years after 2011. The WPRs were multiplied by these population projections to obtain the number of workers for each corresponding year.

But for the years between 2020-21 and 2023-24, India-KLEMS used a totally different source and method. It used population projections from 2011-2036 published by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) in 2020. From the Census figures of 2011, this publication arrived at annual population projections using demographic models that factored in the Total Fertility Rates (TFR) and the mortality rates reported in the Sample Registration System (SRS) of 2017. The simple question is why the India-KLEMS database did not use the MoHFW's population projections for all the years after 2017-18. It appears that while the RBI adds new estimates to the series after 2022, it does not correct or update older estimates published before it began hosting the database.

There are two major issues here. Firstly, population projections from the ES and the MoHFW disregard the sharp fall in fertility rates in India over the last decade. The replacement TFR is canonically assumed to be 2.1 children per woman. However, results from the most recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS) show that India's TFR had fallen to 2.0 in 2019-21. Similarly, a 2024 study published in *The Lancet* argued that the "reference TFR values in Bangladesh and India are projected to decrease below 1.75 by 2026 and 2027, respectively". These falls in TFR are not considered in the population projections in the ES or by MoHFW.

Secondly, the population projections in and by the ES and the MoHFW are not available separately for rural and urban areas. So, the India-KLEMS managers took the national sex-wise populations, assumed population growth rates for rural and urban populations and obtained separate rural and urban population projections. However, it is well-known that India's rural population is growing at a slower rate than the urban population. Assuming uniform growth rates for both is likely to lead to an overestimation of the rural population. For these two reasons, the population figures with which the WPRs were multiplied by in India-KLEMS, and the number of workers obtained thus, are likely to be overestimates.

Shifts in employment structure

When PLFS data are readily available for analysis, one fails to understand the need to depend on India-KLEMS for a temporal analysis of employment. PLFS data show that India's WPR fell from 38.6% in 2011-12 to 34.7% in 2017-18, and then rose to 41.1% in 2022-23. The rise in overall WPR was largely due to a rise in the rural female WPR, which rose from 17.5% in 2017-18 to 30% in 2022-23. WPRs for other population segments also rose, but not as much as for rural women.

These changes are the basis for two claims of the government: one, that crores of new jobs were generated during and after the pandemic; and two, that this phenomenon was gender friendly as women occupied the jobs vacated by men in the rural workforce.

Both the claims are flawed. The rise in rural female WPR was largely due to an increase in unpaid forms of self-employment among rural women in agriculture. Between 2018-19 and 2022-23, the share of rural women employed in agriculture rose from 71.1% to 76.2%, and the share of rural women who were self-employed rose from 67.8% to 78.1%. Among female workers in agriculture, the share of those who were employed purely on a subsidiary basis (that is, those who worked only irregularly, and on a minor scale) rose from 15.6% in 2018-19 to 27.7% in 2022-23. And within all subsidiary employment in agriculture, the share of unpaid family work was about 65% in 2022-23.

But a rise in unpaid subsidiary work can show up as higher WPRs for women. When these rising WPRs are multiplied on with an increasing projected population, we obtain a steady rise in the total number of workers. Even if the WPRs were constant, one would have obtained a rise in the number of workers because of the increase in the projected population. This is what we see in the projected workforce figures in India-KLEMS. In short, there was little expansion of meaningful and paid employment in India after 2017-18. The departure of men from agriculture hardly changed the status of rural working women.

The ASUSE comparison

This leaves us with one outstanding matter – the SBI report's claim that the number of workers in India-KLEMS and ASUSE 2022-23 broadly match. The ASUSE covers only unincorporated non-agricultural establishments in manufacturing, trade and other services. Apart from agriculture, it explicitly excludes a range of manufacturing and trading establishments from its sampling frame. The number of workers in the unincorporated non-agricultural establishments – defined and covered as above in ASUSE – was 11 crore in 2022-23. The SBI report, however, estimates the total number of workers from ASUSE as 56.8 crore, and claims comparability with the figures in India-KLEMS.

Clearly, the SBI report assumed a certain number of workers employed in sectors not covered in ASUSE – such as agriculture, construction, registered factories, corporate sector, government and cooperatives – using other household surveys that employ different concepts and methodologies. It then added those numbers to the number of workers in ASUSE to arrive at the inflated estimate of 56.8 crore workers. But there is no scientific basis for such an indirect method, that too to make an inane and motivated validation.

To sum up, data from India-KLEMS, which was designed for very different purposes and uses questionable methods, are being used to drive a specific political narrative on employment generation. But the real culprit in this episode is the Government of India, which has refused to organise the new decadal Census till date.

The absence of accurate population figures has led analysts and institutions to use many erroneous projections based on heroic assumptions. Consequently, we end up needlessly politicising economic debates and restricting the space for reasoned studies of important trends in the Indian economy.

P. C. Mohanan is former member, National Statistical Commission and R. Ramakumar is Professor, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

THE GIST

- KLEMS stands for Capital (K), Labour (L), Energy (E), Material (M) and Services (S). It is a framework used to measure industry-level "total factor productivity" (TFP), which is considered a measure of the efficiency of all the inputs to produce a unit of output. The objective of the KLEMS framework is not to produce data on employment.
- In India-KLEMS, the estimates of population in 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 were borrowed from the Economic Survey (ES), 2021-22. The ES projected these populations by assuming that population growth rates between 2001 and 2011 were the same for the years after 2011.
- Data from India-KLEMS, which was designed for very different purposes, are being used to drive a political narrative on employment generation.

LOKNITI-CSDS

On the politics of faith: analysing the sensibilities behind the Kanwar Yatra

Given the sheer number of pilgrims that undertake the Kanwar Yatra, governments make every effort to cater to them. At the same time, the close political link between the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Kanwariyas cannot be ignored

Lokniti-CSDS team

In the month of August, streets and highways across Delhi were filled with the vibrant saffron clad figures of Kanwariyas, carrying bamboo poles and pitchers filled with water from the sacred river of Ganga. The Kanwar Yatra, a pilgrimage undertaken annually by lakhs of Shiva devotees, has largely been a peaceful event. However, this year was marked by significant escalation in violence, vandalism and physical assault by Kanwariyas across various States, with at least 11 such reported incidents. These include the attack on a Sikh school bus in Haryana's Fatehabad, the assault of a Muslim man in Uttar Pradesh's Meerut and the forced entry into a female bathing area at a religious place in Rajasthan's Jhunjhunu, amongst others.

The Lokniti-CSDS conducted a survey of 1,029 Kanwariyas to explore their backgrounds, and experiences during their religious pilgrimage.

A journey of faith

The Kanwar Yatra, a pilgrimage undertaken annually by lakhs of Shiva devotees, has largely been a peaceful event. However, this year was marked by significant escalation in violence by Kanwariyas across various States

Table 1: Most pilgrims are accompanied by friends or family, 16% go alone

	(%)
Friends	57
Family members	24
Alone	16

Note: The rest either travelled with persons from their caste/community, neighbours or with people they met during the course of the pilgrimage

Question asked: *Who is accompanying you in the Kanwar Yatra?*

Table 2: One-fifth of devotees support intoxication

Preferred activities during Yatra	(%)
Playing loud music	79
Intoxication	19
Alone	16

Note: The rest did not support such activities or did not respond

Question asked: *Some Kanwariyas do the above activities during the journey to express their happiness, do you support intoxication?*

Table 3: Overwhelming support for the govt. order to write the names of shopkeepers on their outlets

Opinion	(%)
In favour of the order	79
Do not support the order	17

Note: The rest did not know | ***Question asked:*** *Do you think the order to shopkeepers to write their names on their shops or carts is right or wrong?*

Table 4: Importance attached to the identity of the shopkeeper while buying food

Identity of shop-keeper	The extent to which identity matters to pilgrims while buying food		
	Important	Somewhat important	Not important
Religion	34	14	50
Caste	18	12	69

Note: The rest did not respond. | ***Question asked:*** *Does the religion/caste of the shopkeeper from whom you are buying food items matter to you?*

Table 5: The dietary habits of Yatris and their support for the government order

		Opinion about order	
	Overall	In favour	Against it
Completely vegetarian	51	79	16
Eggetarian	14	91	8
Non-vegetarian	34	71	25

Note: All figures are in per cent. The rest either did not respond or gave other responses | ***Question asked:*** *Are you vegetarian or non-vegetarian? Do you think that the order to shopkeepers to write their names on their shops or carts is right or wrong?*

Table 6: Most pilgrims could avail facilities provided by the government

Facilities availed by pilgrims	(%)
Arrangements to take rest	90
Drinking water facility	89
Food and refreshments	88
Medical facility	87
Alternate route for commuting	86
Crowd control arrangement	82
Restroom facility	65

Note: The rest either could not avail the facilities or did not know about them. | ***Question asked:*** *The government has provided some facilities to the Kanwariyas, tell me if you could avail the above facilities?*

Table 7: Majority of the pilgrims were satisfied with the facilities provided by the government

Level of satisfaction	(%)
Completely satisfied	61
Somewhat satisfied	26
Somewhat unsatisfied	8
Completely unsatisfied	5

Note: The rest did not respond
Question asked: *Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with these facilities?*

Table 8: The facilities sought by pilgrims

	(%)
Toilets	52
Diversion of traffic	42
Safety and security	41
Resting facilities	39
Food and water supply	36
Medical facilities	24
Complaints centre	15
Special arrangements for disabled, elderly etc.	12
Any other	12
Facilities for religious rituals and ceremonies	7
Information booths and sign boards	6

Note: The rest did not respond. Respondents were allowed to give more than one response.
Question asked: *What kind of facilities do you want from the government for Kanwar pilgrims?*

Who are the Kanwariyas?

While the pilgrimage is open to all, men make up the majority of the Kanwariyas. 95% of the surveyed participants were men, and only 5% were women. Female pilgrims face unique challenges. One in every five respondents (22%) believe that women should not participate in this Yatra, citing concerns about women's safety (62%), health issues and menstruation (13%). About one in 10 also reported that women distract and slow the pace of the journey.

Kanwariyas come from diverse backgrounds. Surprisingly, devotees with a graduate degree are twice as likely to join the pilgrimage compared to those without formal education (16% vs 8%). The majority of participants hail from lower- and middle-class backgrounds (27%), with their involvement slightly higher than that of both the most underprivileged (23%) and the more affluent groups (22%). The Yatra saw significant participation from marginalised communities, with Dalits and OBCs making up 22% and 21% of the interviewed devotees, respectively. Upper-caste devotees also form a significant portion, with about one-third devotees belonging to this group.

Walking remains the most popular mode of travel, with about eight in 10 devotees covering the route by foot. Others use cycles or motorcycles, truck/tempos, shared vehicles or a car.

Social connections are integral to the pilgrimage. Over half of the devotees were accompanied by their friends (57%), whereas another quarter journeyed with their families. Only 16% were travelling alone (Table 1). The Yatra can also be financially demanding. While 90% are able to manage their expenses, the rest reach out to their family or friends for assistance. About one-third (30%) indicated that bearing the financial expense is difficult for them.

Why do they do it?

The Kanwariyas were asked about their motivations for undertaking this pilgrimage. A majority of the devotees cited religious or spiritual reasons, viewing the offering of sacred water to Lord Shiva as a means to gain divine blessings. A substantial portion also indicated that they went entirely for company and personal enjoyment. A few devotees participated to fulfil a vow while some others were driven by family or community engagements.

The Yatra also serves as a social and celebratory event, with participants engaging in loud music and, in some cases, intoxication. While 79% of the devotees support the practice of playing loud music, one fifth (19%) also believe that celebrating via intoxication is acceptable during the journey (Table 2).

On the politics of the Yatra

Last month, the Uttar Pradesh police directed eateries along the route of the ongoing Kanwar Yatra to display names of their owners and staff. This was followed by similar directions from the Uttarakhand police and the Ujjain Municipal Corporation. A number of vague but seemingly neutral reasons had been cited by the agencies for issuing such orders. The Supreme Court subsequently stayed the implementation of these orders. However, as many as 79% of the pilgrims feel that the step taken by the respective governments was correct (Table 3). This response opens up many questions about the complex issues surrounding the nature of religiosity and the political side of the pilgrimage.

Though a majority supported the move to have the names of the shop owners identified, a large number of respondents stated that the religious or caste identity of the vendor is not important for them when buying food (Table 4). Of course, a considerable section of the pilgrims are particular about knowing the social identity of those from who they buy food. For three in 10 (30%) respondents, the caste of the shopkeeper is important and for more than four in 10 (46%), religion of the shopkeeper is important. Such an attitude arises out of the dietary habits of the pilgrims. Half of those (51%) undertaking the Kanwar Yatra are completely vegetarian while another 14% are eggetarians. Non-vegetarian food is consumed by 34% of the pilgrims (Table 5). Support for the government order is higher among vegetarians with 79% complete vegetarians and 91% eggetarians endorsing it. A relatively lesser proportion of non-vegetarians (71%) have a similar opinion.

Additionally, as many as 84% of the respondents feel that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has done the most for those undertaking the Kanwar Yatra. Given the sheer number of pilgrims that undertake the Kanwar Yatra, governments make every effort to cater to them. This is both out of legitimate responsibility as well as due to political reasons. At the same time, however, the close political link between the BJP and the Kanwariyas cannot be ignored. When asked which party they feel close to, the answers of the Kanwariyas were quite one-sided. An overwhelming majority of 74% of the pilgrims have an inclination for the BJP. This close connection with the BJP makes the Yatra an important political event.

On facilities along the Yatra

This controversial order apart, governments generally have gone a long way in looking after the interests of the Yatris and to make arrangements for the convenience of those participating in the Kanwar Yatra. Nearly 90% of the pilgrims have availed various facilities provided by the government (Table 6). It indicates the extent of the outreach by the government and the dependence of the Yatra on official patronage.

Pilgrims are generally satisfied with these arrangements made by the government. 61% were completely satisfied and only a small proportion of the pilgrims were unsatisfied (Table 7). Those who undertook the Kanwar Yatra previously are also impressed by the steps taken by the government this year. 58% pilgrims hold that more facilities have been provided this year compared to the last two years. 17% feel that facilities are more or less like before.

Despite extensive support by the government, the Kanwariyas expect more. 52% of the pilgrims expect the government to do more with regard to toilet facilities (Table 8). 42% want the government to divert traffic from the route of the pilgrimage more effectively. Beside these, a considerable proportion of the pilgrims seek improvements in safety and security measures (41%), resting facilities (39%) and food and water supply (36%), among other things.

The following were part of the team. Suhas Palshikar is chief editor of Studies in Indian Politics. Devesh Kumar and Vibha Attri are researchers at Lokniti-CSDS. Sandeep Shastri is Director-Academics, NITTE Education Trust and the national coordinator of the Lokniti Network, Abhinav Pankaj Borbora and Jyoti Mishra are researchers at Lokniti-CSDS.

To read more, please go to thehindu.com or scan this link bit.ly/thehinducom.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on the city of Chennai on the occasion of Madras day

Venkataraghavan. S

QUESTION 1
The Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Arts and Science College for Women replaced this iconic location. Name the place. Hint: People who were there are now at Koyambedu and there is a Tamil Song by Deva on them!

QUESTION 2
The State Government has announced that it would be launching an Independence Day Museum that will house memorabilia from the freedom struggle, a gallery for women freedom fighters and a digital museum for lesser-known freedom fighters. Where is it going to be housed?

QUESTION 3
What did Krishna Rao, a native of Udupi who started as a dish washer and then climbed up to become a restaurateur, start up at Royapettah on land that he leased from the Sethupathi Raja of Ramnad?

QUESTION 4
How do we now know "The Pudupet Maidan" where in 1954, the then Inspector-General of Police, V.R. Rajarathinam, decide to move the annual police sports meet?

QUESTION 5
By what names are the twin hamlets that are in between Mylapore and Long Tank now known as?

Visual question:
Name this short stretch of road, arguably the most beautiful architectural stretch of "Madras" that goes south from NSC Bose Road and ends at the intersection of Sir T. Muthuswami Aiyar and North Fort Roads. FILE PHOTO

Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz: 1. This American jazz musician was born on August 21 in 1904. **Ans: Count Basie**
2. This country declared its independence from the Soviet Union on August 21, 1991. **Ans: Latvia**
3. This U.S. State became the 50th State of America in 1959. **Ans: Hawaii**
4. This Disney animated film was released on August 21 in the U.S. in 1942. **Ans: *Bambi***
5. This Indian musician credited with popularising the 'shehnai' died in 2006. **Ans: Bismillah Khan**
6. This Indian-American theoretical physicist was awarded the 1983 Nobel Prize in physics along with William A. Fowler. **Ans: Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar**
Visual: The connection between this painting and August 21. **Ans: On this day, the Mona Lisa was stolen from the Louvre by three people, and was recovered two years later**
Early Birds: Tamal Biswas| K.N.Viswanathan| Joseph Nelson| Varghese Joseph| Tahura Shaikh

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

K. Subrahmanian

"Hello, you goldbrick."

"Don't call me a goldbrick. You told me last week that a goldbrick is a lazy person. And I'm certainly not lazy."

"But you like gold, don't you?"

"Not any more. I've realised that not all words which have "gold" in them have a golden meaning."

"All that glitters is not gold, eh?"

"Yes. While we are on the subject of gold, what's this "golden handshake" we hear about so often these days?"

You haven't even got a job so far. Why are you so worried about the golden handshake?"

"I'm not worried about it. I'd just like to know what it is."

"Well, a golden handshake is actually a large sum of money given to an employee when he/she retires."

"Who gives the money?"

"The company that the employee works for. A golden handshake is a kind of reward for the long service and good work put in by an employee."

"I see. So when my father retires at 60, he'll be given the golden handshake."

"Perhaps. And what our Prime Minister said some time ago is that any government employee who takes voluntary retirement will be given the golden handshake."

"You mean people are actually going to be paid a lot of money for retiring early?"

"Yes. The golden handshake is also known as the "golden goodbye."

"Golden goodbye, eh? I suppose it's called that because you say goodbye to your career. But before you say goodbye, you normally say hello. So, is there a "golden hello" as well?"

"Strangely enough, there is."

"I knew it. What does it mean?"

"Well, the "golden hello" is the opposite of the "golden goodbye" in the sense that you don't leave a company, but join one. It is actually a large sum of money paid to someone for joining a company."

"So when top people leave one company and join another, a golden hello is involved."

"It must be. Otherwise, why would they change companies?"

"That's true. How can we prevent this from happening?"

"Prevent what from happening?"

"You know, prevent people from leaving one company and joining another."

"What would you do if you were the chairman of a company?"

"Well, if I heard that some bright chap was leaving my company, I'd pay him a lot of money to stay on with us."

"Excellent. And that's what many big companies do. They make a large payment to an employee so that he continues to work for the company."

"Is there a name for this?"

"Yes. It's called the 'golden handcuff'."

"Golden handcuffs? But aren't handcuffs the things that are put on people who have been arrested?"

"Yes. So when you put the golden handcuffs on someone, you prevent him from running away from your company."

"I have no company. I have only you as company."

Published in The Hindu on February 16, 1993.

Word of the day

Impugn:
attack as false or wrong

Synonym: challenge

Usage: *He impugned his rival's character*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/impugnpro

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ɪmˈpjuːn/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

From Page One

Centre debates taking a caste count amid Census

"Assuming that some castes may bifurcate into sub-castes, the total number cannot be exponentially high to this extent," the affidavit read, adding that the data cannot be relied on for reservation in education, employment or elections to local authorities.

The Census, last held in 2011, was to undertaken in two phases: houselisting and housing schedule in 2020 and population enumeration in 2021, but it was indefinitely delayed, initially due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The National Population Register (NPR) is also to be updated simultaneously with the first phase of the Census.

The next Census will also be the first digital Census where respondents will have the option to fill the questionnaire on their own.

The deadline to freeze administrative boundaries of districts, tehsils, towns and municipal bodies, among others, lapsed on June 30 this year. The order to freeze the boundaries, usually issued three months before the first phase of Census, has been extended 10 times since 2019.

Bihar was one of the first States to conduct and publish a caste census report in 2023. Collected in offline and digital modes, the enumerators were given a list of 215 categories, from which people had to choose their caste.

Earlier in 2015, the Congress government in Karnataka commissioned a caste census, the report of which has not been made public so far.

The 31 questions for the first phase – houselisting and housing schedule – were notified on January 9, 2020. As many as 28 questions have been finalised for the second phase – population enumeration – but are yet to be notified. The final set of questions for both the phases were asked during a pre-test exercise in 2019 in 76 districts in 36 States and Union Territories, covering a population of more than 26 lakh.

17 workers killed as fire breaks out after blast

Many workers from surrounding pharma companies, residents from Lalam Koduru, Maturu, and SEZ Colony, members of workers' unions, leaders from the CITU, CPI(M) and other parties reached the factory and expressed anger at the management for its alleged violation of safety norms.

"It has been over six hours since the accident occurred, but till now there is no clarity regarding the toll or injured workers. Though such accidents have been occurring frequently, no measures have been taken. Do our lives matter," a furious pharma worker asked.

CITU district vice-president Ganisetti Satyanarayana said such a major accident had not occurred in recent times. He said 12 fire tenders were engaged in dousing the fire for over six hours, but still the firemen were not able to bring the situation under control.

CPI(M) Anakapalli district secretary K. Lokanadham said repeated accidents had been occurring due to alleged negligence and apathy of the managements. The previous governments had not bothered and failed to take stringent measures. It had been several years since a safety audit was conducted.

"Only during such accidents, the authorities form committees. Later the reports of the committees are ignored," he alleged.

Spread across 40 acres, Escientia Advanced Sciences, was set up in 2019 with a budget of around ₹200 crore. The company manufactures active pharmaceutical ingredients (API).

Police teams with forensic experts were at the site and an investigation is on.

PM begins Poland visit, says it will help forge more vibrant relations

It is the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister in 45 years; Modi interacts with the Indian diaspora in Warsaw; pays homage to Jam Saheb of Nawanagar at his memorial and to Indian and Polish soldiers who fought in the Second World War

Dinakar Peri
WARSAW

Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrived in Warsaw on Wednesday, the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister to Poland in 45 years.

Mr. Modi expressed confidence that the visit will serve as a "natural continuation of extensive contacts" between the two countries and help create the foundation for stronger and more vibrant relations in the years ahead. He will visit Ukraine next.

"My visit to Poland comes as we mark 70 years of our diplomatic relations. Poland is a key economic partner in Central Europe. Our mutual commitment to democracy and pluralism further reinforces our relationship. I look forward to meeting my friend Prime Minister Donald Tusk and President Andrzej Duda to further advance our partnership. I will also engage with the members of the vibrant Indian community in Poland," Mr. Modi said in a statement before he emplaned for Poland.

Warm welcome: Prime Minister Narendra Modi being received by Poland's Deputy Foreign Minister Władysław T. Bartoszewski on his arrival in Warsaw on Wednesday. ANI

Mr. Modi landed in Warsaw around 2 p.m. and was welcomed by members of the Indian community as he arrived at the hotel. There was a *Garbha* performance by an Indo-Polish group. One community member, Sahiba Patni, an entrepreneur based in London, flew down just to see Mr. Modi.

In his first engagement, Mr. Modi laid a wreath at the memorial to Jam Saheb Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji Jadeja of Nawanagar, Gujarat who provided sanctuary to over 1,000 Polish students in the 1940s. In his honour, a square in the heart of Warsaw has been named "Dobrego Maharadzy" or "Good Maharaja Square".

Mr. Modi later paid homage at the monument for the Battle of Monte Cassino. The monument honours Indian and Polish soldiers who fought in the battle that took place in Italy between January and May 1944 and was one of the defining battles of the Second World War.

Mr. Modi also laid a wreath at the Kolhapur memorial at the same location and also interacted with those who found shelter in India in the 1940s and their family members.

The Battle of Monte Cassino was one of the major battles fought and won by the Polish forces (as part of the larger Allied powers) in Italy against the Axis forces, said Krzysztof Iwanek, an Indologist and Asia Coordinator at the Warsaw-based Foundation Institute for Eastern Studies.

"It is remembered as one of the glorious moments in the history of Polish military. Altogether, I think it is a good place for India's PM to pay his respects," he told *The Hindu*.

On the significance of Mr. Modi's visit to Poland, Mr. Iwanek observed that this visit, as he understands, will have main two angles. "New Delhi's balancing act between the West and Russia (as PM Modi visited Russia recently and will visit Ukraine after Poland)," he said.

"As far as the second aspect is concerned, I would hope that opportunities for deepening trade and investments will be discussed, especially with Poland being a part of the EU, and the EU being currently in negotiations with India regarding a possible investment deal and a separate FTA deal," he added.

Rajnath to go to U.S. as mega defence deals near closure

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is set to visit the U.S. from August 23 to 26. This comes as several high-end defence deals between India and U.S, are in the final stages of conclusion.

The visit comes as several high end defence deals are lined up as also friction over issues like Prime Minister's visit to Russia and the Pannun episode. In addition, a key concern for the Defence Ministry at the moment is delay in deliveries from General Electric (GE) of the F404 engines for the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Mk1A which has held up deliveries of the jets by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to the Indian Air Force (IAF).

During the visit, Mr. Singh will hold a bilateral meeting with his U.S. counterpart Secretary Lloyd Austin and will also meet the U.S. National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan.

Mr. Singh will also chair a high-level round-table meeting with the U.S. defence industry on the ongoing and future defence collaborations. He will also interact with the Indian community during visit.

Cong. protecting perpetrators of Ajmer gangrape-blackmail case: BJP

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday claimed that three of the convicts in the gang rape and blackmailing of over 100 school and college-going girls in Rajasthan's Ajmer in 1992 were previously linked to the Congress party.

On Tuesday, a special court on the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act in Ajmer on Tuesday awarded life sentences to six persons in the case. The victims were between 11 to 20 years old.

BJP national spokesperson Prem Shukla on Wednesday said instead of getting them punished, the previous Congress governments had ensured that the perpetrators of a particular religion were given clean chit. He said the court's verdict "exposed the alliance" between the perpetrators and Congress leaders.

Police personnel present one of the accused at a POCSO court in the 1992 rape case in Ajmer on Tuesday. FILE PHOTO

"The evil '*khadims*' of Ajmer were blackmailing more than 100 innocent girls by raping them. All the Congress governments have worked to protect those rapists. Instead of getting them punished, the Congress governments indulged in Muslim appeasement and they were given clean chit," he said.

Mr. Shukla said three convicts were earlier linked to the Congress. "Farooq Chishti was the president of Ajmer Youth Congress at that time, Nafees Chishti the vice-president of Ajmer Youth Congress and Anwar Chishti the secretary of Ajmer Congress," he alleged.

He targeted the Congress and its allies terming them "Save Rapists Alliance". He sought an apology from Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and the Congress.

He said the main Opposition party was more concerned about vote-bank politics than the dignity of victims.

"When the rapists of a particular religion are unmasked, why do the leaders of INDI Alliance maintain silence? If the president of Samajwadi Party's madrasa unit is caught in a rape case, then they maintain silence, why?" he asked.

Delighted by Modi's visit to Ukraine, says senior U.S. official

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

Expressing "delight" at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "important visit" to Kyiv this week, a senior U.S. official, who is visiting New Delhi, said it is clear that the global community has taken a stand against Russia's war in Ukraine.

Richard Verma

U.S. Deputy Secretary of State and former U.S. Ambassador to India Richard Verma was given additional charge as the U.S.'s Special Representative for Ukraine's Economic Recovery last week, and had travelled to India and Nepal for meetings. His comments came weeks after a series of critical remarks by the U.S. State Department over Mr. Modi's visit to Moscow on July 9, indicating that Mr. Modi's decision to travel to Poland and Ukraine has now been appreciated in Washington.

"I am delighted about this visit and I think it is an important visit," Mr. Verma said, speaking at a discussion on "The United States and India: A Partnership of Progress and Promise", held at the Delhi-based Centre For Social and Economic Progress (CSEP), where he laid out recent developments in the bilateral relationship. "What we have witnessed over the last two-and-a-half years is an attempt by Russia to destabilise the global order, to upend the post World War system," he added, accusing Russia of annexing Ukrainian territory in contravention of international law.

"We understand India's long relationship with Russia, and India has to make its own determination of where it wants to be on the scale," Mr. Verma said, while praising Mr. Modi's statement that this is not a "time for war". "But this is a very consequential period for the defence of liberty, freedom and the rule of law," he added, saying later that he "looked forward to the outcomes" of Mr. Modi's Kyiv visit.

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has thus far made no comment about Mr. Modi's visit to Ukraine, that comes as the Ukrainian army has reportedly made advances into Russia's Kursk region.

The Russian Embassy in India also did not offer a response to Mr. Verma's comments.

In his talk, Mr. Verma covered a number of areas where Indian and U.S. ties have grown in the past few years, making a special mention of joint projects in climate change, advanced technologies, space and cancer research.

Rana extradition

Meanwhile, in response to a question about the long-pending Indian request for the extradition of Tahawwur Hussain Rana, wanted as a co-conspirator in the 2008 Mumbai attack, a U.S. Embassy official confirmed that a U.S. court had rejected his appeal.

"We're fortunate to have an extradition agreement with the Government of India that allows for extradition between our countries. His [Rana's] lawyers filed an appeal that you saw was rejected by the courts," U.S. Embassy spokesperson Chris Elms said, speaking at the same event.

He added that the "case continues to proceed in the legal system in the United States", but didn't furnish details over how much longer it could take for Rana, who has been in custody in a Los Angeles jail since 2020 pending the extradition hearings, to be handed over to India to face trial here.

Social media firms told to remove posts naming victim

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Electronics and Information Technology Ministry on Wednesday ordered social media platforms to remove posts naming the victim of the alleged rape and murder at a Kolkata hospital on August 9.

The order to platforms comes as an enforcement of Supreme Court directions issued on Tuesday, after two lawyers approached the court regarding the wide circulation of the victim's name, and images of her body after the incident.

The trainee doctor's identity has been spread on social media, in spite of laws that forbid the disclosure of the identity of sexual assault victims.

The Ministry also directed social media companies to submit a compliance report.

Dalit, tribal organisations protest against SC's sub-quota decision

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI/PATNA/BHOPAL

Coalition groups representing more than 21 Dalit and Adivasi associations on Wednesday held protest marches and rail and road blockades against the Supreme Court's August 1 judgment on the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes. They demanded that the Centre clear its stand on sub-categorisation, bring a law to "nullify" the judgment, and conduct a caste census to reveal the "real situation" of different castes in India.

Earlier in the day, Union Minister Chirag Paswan joined a host of prominent Opposition leaders from across parties to support the peaceful protests against the Supreme Court's judgment allowing sub-categorisation of the SC quota, saying on Wednesday that he and his party – the Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), an NDA ally – "morally supported" the protests against the "Supreme Court's decision on SC-ST reservation".

Bhim Army chief Chandra Shekhar Aazad with others during a protest at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Wednesday. PTI

While normal life was affected in Bihar and Jharkhand, where the police resorted to baton charging protesters and using water cannons, other States like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Odisha, Gujarat saw these outfits take out protest marches in several districts. Many protesters alleged violence by the police in Uttar Pradesh.

As the protests continued through the day, the central leaderships of principal Opposition parties – the Congress and the Samajwadi Party – expressed support for the protests while also maintaining their ambiguity on the core issue of sub-categorisation of SC and ST quotas; whereas smaller parties like the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Azad Samaj Party, and Bharat Adivasi Party wholeheartedly opposed sub-categorisation, with many prominent Bahujan leaders in the North too supporting the protests.

Congress leader Pawan Khera, in a statement, said, "People from SC/ST/OBC are always being kept anxious about one thing or the other and this anxiety about the Centre's intent is there amongst them. And it is their right to protest peacefully against what they consider incorrect."

Meanwhile, Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal told presspersons that the Centre had already clarified its stand on the "creamy layer" observations of some judges, reiterating the government's stand that the order was meant for the States.

(With inputs from PTI)

Construction, hydel projects a threat to Sikkim's ecology: Cong.

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after landslide struck east Sikkim, the Congress on Wednesday hit out at the Centre for "unplanned" construction and a spate of hydel projects in an ecologically fragile area, making the region prone to floods and landslides.

"Hydel projects have been coming up over the past few years without giving adequate thought to their CUMULATIVE environmental impacts," Congress general secretary and former Union Minister for Environment Jairam Ramesh, said. "Dams on the Teesta [river] are the prime but not the only example of how – in the name of development – ecology is being fundamentally altered, with grave consequences for this and future generations," Mr. Ramesh said.

Kharge, Rahul reach J&K, to hold talks with NC leaders

Big welcome: Rahul Gandhi waves at party supporters outside the Srinagar airport on Wednesday. IMRAN NISSAR

Peerzada Ashiq
SRINAGAR

Top Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge and Rahul Gandhi arrived in Srinagar on Wednesday on a two-day visit ahead of the first-ever Assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir after it was made a Union Territory.

Their visit comes in the midst of hectic backchannel dialogue between the Congress and the National Conference (NC) to iron out details regarding a pre-poll alliance for the election to be held next month.

Mr. Kharge and Mr. Gandhi received a rousing reception from Congress supporters on their arrival in Srinagar. They met Congress leaders from J&K, including State president Tariq Hameed Karra and Ghulam Ahmad Mir, for their inputs on the "poll strategy for the upcoming Assembly election".

"Mr. Kharge*ji* and Rahul Gandhi*ji* will be visiting Jammu and Srinagar for key meetings in preparation for the upcoming Assembly election," Congress general secretary K.C. Venugopal said.

Party sources said there were "a few sticky points" between the Congress and the NC regarding a pre-poll alliance, as negotiations between second-rung leadership were on for a few days. The sticky points might be left to the top leadership of the Congress and the Abdullahs of the NC to find a solution, they added.

Decision tomorrow

Sources said Mr. Gandhi, who is likely to open direct channels of communications with the Abdullahs, will announce a final decision on the pre-poll alliance by Friday.

The Congress is demanding a significant share of seats from the Kashmir Valley, which has 47 Assembly segments. However, the NC is more keen on a pre-poll alliance in the Jammu region, which has 43 seats.

A proposal to have a friendly contest for many Kashmir seats was also discussed in the backchannel dialogue, sources said.

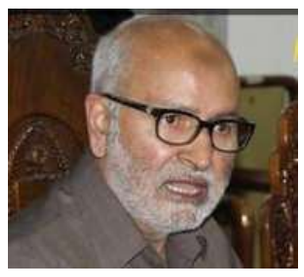
The NC and the Congress – both INDIA bloc partners – had entered into a pre-poll alliance during the Lok Sabha election in J&K earlier this year.

The Congress fielded candidates from the two Lok Sabha seats in the Jammu region, while the NC contested from the three seats in the Kashmir Valley. The two jointly managed to get the highest vote share of 41.6%, with 21.45 lakh voters voting for them

PDP ready to strike pre-poll alliance with Congress

Rahul is an impactful voice who can raise issues of Kashmir, work towards broader coalition, says PDP leader; the tough times 'demand a unified voice outside and inside the Assembly', he says

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR



The Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Wednesday kept its doors open to engage the Congress for talks on a pre-poll coalition for the Assembly election in J&K, and described visiting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi "as an impactful voice who could raise issues of Kashmir and work towards broader coalition in J&K".

"Mr. Gandhi has emerged as an impactful voice and is able to create a new atmosphere in the country. If Mr. Gandhi is able to connect with local voices in J&K and offer the role of hand-holding, the PDP is always open to the idea," PDP leader Naeem Akhtar told *The Hindu*, in an interview.

Mr. Akthtar, considered close to PDP president Mehbooba Mufti, said the tough times Kashmir was going through "demand a unified voice outside and inside the Assembly".

"All local parties in J&K are on the same page today. It was evident from the National Conference manifesto. It reflected the essence of what PDP founder Mufti Muhammad Sayeed advocated since 2002. Kashmir needs to be a bridge between India and Pakistan and not a battlefield," Mr. Akhtar said.

He asked Mr. Gandhi to play a role at the crucial juncture of Kashmir's history.

"The Congress has been responsible for Kashmir joining India. It's the moral responsibility of the Congress to bring us out from the dark pit we have been pushed into. Mr. Gandhi and his party should accept Kashmir as a moral question," Mr. Akhtar said.

> Kashmir needs to be a bridge between India and Pakistan and not a battlefield....we are ready for an engagement with the Congress
>
> **NAEEM AKHTAR**
> PDP leader

The PDP leader dropped broad hints at a pre-poll alliance with the Congress "to form a joint front" against the BJP.

"We are ready for an engagement with the Congress," Mr. Akhtar said.

He said it was Ms. Mufti who set the stage for coalition in J&K on August 4, 2019.

"She knocked on the doors of senior leaders, including Dr. Abdullah, J&K Peoples Conference president Sajad Lone etc. to join hands against the tsunami unleashed against J&K. It was a functional and vast State showcasing diverse identities from Muslims to Buddhists to Hindus. J&K is pushed into a deep gorge and punished apparently for being home to the majority of Muslims," Mr. Akhtar said.

"The regional parties have no ground to fight against each other, given we all are at the bottom of the dark pit," he added.

He asked Mr. Gandhi to speak about the issues of Kashmir. "Only Mr. Gandhi could make issues of Kashmir as national issues," Mr. Akhtar said.

Mr. Gandhi is likely to hold a series of meetings with senior party leaders and later with the National Conference (NC) leaders, Dr. Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah. The two parties are already holding backchannel meetings to finalise seat-sharing arrangements in J&K.

'151 MPs, MLAs have declared cases related to crimes against women'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Sixteen MPs and 135 MLAs have declared that they have cases related to crimes against women registered against them. The largest number of such lawmakers are from West Bengal, according to a report.

The report is based on an analysis of 755 out of 776 affidavits of MPs and 3,938 out of 4,033 of MLAs from all 28 States and eight Union Territories in the past five years.

The report, prepared by the Association for Democratic Reforms and National Election Watch, also includes affidavits submitted for bypolls held during this period following resignation, death or vacancy due to any other reason.

Among political parties, the Bharatiya Janata Party has the highest number of MPs or MLAs with such cases registered against them at 54, followed by the Congress with 23.

Among the States, West Bengal has the highest number of MPs or MLAs with these cases against them at 25. The report says that there are two MPs and 14 MLAs who have declared cases related to rape under Section 376 of the Indian Penal Code, which carries a minimum sentence of 10 years and can be extended to life imprisonment.

The charges include repeated offences against the same victim, it said.

INBRIEF

Jailed MP Rashid's brother quits govt. job to support AIP

Sheikh Khursheed, brother of jailed MP Engineer Rashid (in picture), has quit government service in north Kashmir to widen the base of the Rashid-headed Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) ahead of the Assembly election in J&K. "I have quit the government job to strengthen the party. I am not sure whether I will contest myself or not," Mr. Khursheed said. The leaders of AIP are hopeful to see Mr. Rashid out of jail, after the AIP chief submitted a regular bail application in Delhi's Patiala House court on Wednesday. Mr. Rashid was arrested in 2019 in an alleged terror funding case of 2017.

Loyalty, winnability the focus at Haryana Cong. poll meet

Top Haryana Congress leaders met in the Capital on Wednesday to firm up the party's Assembly polls strategy, with winnability and loyalty stressed upon for candidates' selection. After the meeting, a party leader said, "Rahul Gandhi has given a clear instruction that those who are loyal and winnable should be given importance in ticket distribution. Our in-charge emphasised this in the meeting." He added that the process of selection of candidates will begin within the next few days. Former Chief Minister Bhupinder Hooda and senior leaders like Kumari Selja and Randeep Surjewala were present at the meeting. PTI

Centre accords Z-plus security cover to Sharad Pawar

The Central government on Wednesday accorded the highest category of armed VIP security cover – Z-plus – to Nationalist Congress Party (SP) chief Sharad Pawar, official sources said, adding that the Union Home Ministry has asked the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) to extend the cover to the 83-year-old former Maharashtra Chief Minister. A team of 55 armed CRPF personnel has been earmarked for the task, and the team is already in the State, they said. A threat assessment review by Central agencies had recommended a strong security cover for Mr. Pawar, sources said. PTI

Why isn't CCI scrutinising Adani Group, asks Congress

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday questioned the Competition Commission of India (CCI) over its approval of all acquisitions by the Adani Group, alleging that the conglomerate is building monopolies across key infrastructure sector to the detriment of customers.

The Congress statement came on a day when it held press conferences across 10 cities on the Adani group.

In a post on X, Congress communications chief Jairam Ramesh referred to the CCI raising concerns over the proposed Reliance-Disney merger owing to the possibility that it would stifle competition. "It is a good time to reflect on how the CCI should have also had the courage to address how the non-biological PM's other favourite business conglomerate is acquiring companies and reducing competition across various industries," Mr. Ramesh said.

He pointed out that the CCI is legally mandated to approve mergers and acquisitions that exceed a certain threshold size. "Yet, all acquisitions by the Adani Group have been approved, even as the company builds monopolies in sectors like ports, airports, and power often through threats and intimidation that have the backing of the powers-that-be," Mr. Ramesh alleged.

HANDLOOMS & TEXTILES DEPARTMENT, GOVT. OF ANDHRA PRADESH
O/o. The Commissioner of Handlooms & Textiles, IHC Corporate Buildings, Mangalagiri, Guntur District, Andhra Pradesh, Pin:522503

Tender Notice No. 01/Commissioner, H&T/2024-25, Dated:21.08.2024
Name of work: Construction of Unity Mall in 5.00 Acres of land at Survey No.426/2 of Madhurawada Revenue Village, Visakhapatnam Rural Mandal, Visakhapatnam District: **ECV: Rs.1,09,11,92,006/-**
Date of Publication : 21.08.2024 at 05:00 PM
Last date submission of bids : 04.09.2024 up to 05:00 PM.
Sd/- Commissioner, Handlooms & Textiles Dept.
The details of tender notice and bid document can be downloaded from **website https://tender.apeprocurement.gov.in** wherein select Department as "AP Industrial Infrastructure Corporation Ltd."
DIPR 3129PP/CL, Dt: 21/08/2024

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(Regd. Office PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala)
Corporate Identification Number: U40109PB010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in (Contact Number. 9646117607)

TENDER Inquiry No. 79/CHP/OP-321/GHTP/2024-25 **Dated: 20/08/2024**
Dy.CE/MM-II/GHTP, Lehra Mohabbat invites E-tender for the work of "Providing support at the vital location/equipments for operation of coal handling plant as per scope of work on Stage-I & II at CHP, GHTP, Lehra Mohabat".
For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 20/08/2024 from 17:00 PM onwards.
Note: Corrigendum and addendum if any, will be published online at https://eproc.punjab.gov.in
GHTP - 69/24 **76155/12/3317/2023/36863**

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT)
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF RESEARCH OFFICER
HYDRAULICS DIVISION No.1, K.E.R.S., K.R.SAGARA
571607, KARNATAKA
(Phone and fax: 08236-297253,
Email: crohvd1krs@gmail.com)
No:CRO/KERS/HYD/PB/SCADA/
Rate.Enquiry.Quotation/254/2024-25
Date: 19.08.2024

QUOTATION NOTIFICATION FOR RATE ENQUIRY
Competitive quotations from prospective bidders are invited by this office for adopting the rates in the estimate for 'Canal Automation Facility (SCADA) at Hydraulics Division, KERS' under the work of "Upgradation of Hydraulics Division Dam Models at KERS, K.R.Sagara (Package 2) under World Bank aided DRIP- Phase-II". Item wise description of the work can be obtained from **https://waterresources.karnataka.gov.in/info-4/Procurements/en.** The Rate quotations shall be sent to this office email address through open email or sealed quotations through post or courier or by-hand addressed to "The Chief Research Officer, Hydraulics Division, No.1, KERS, Krishnarajasagara-571607" so as to reach on or before 4.00 PM of 31/08/2024. Further details can be obtained from the under signed during Office hours.
Sd/- Chief Research Officer, Hydraulics Division No. 1, K.E.R.S., K.R.Sagara
DIPR/AD-MDY/KSMCA/266/2024-25

Kerala Development and Innovation Strategic Council (K-DISC),
India Heights Building, Govt Women's College Road, Vazhuthacadu, Thycadu P O, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
Email: ms@kdisc.kerala.gov.in
Quotation Notice Number: 2427/2024/KDISC
Quotations are invited from manufacturers/suppliers for supply of 10 kg, NMC 811 cathode material for LTO - NMC Cells. **Bid submission end date 05/09/2024, 5.00 pm.**
For more details: 9188617402, 8547510783
Website: www.kdisc.kerala.gov.in **Member Secretary**
D3/503/2024/I&PRD

SECURITY PRINTING PRESS, HYDERABAD (TS)
(A UNIT OF SECURITY PRINTING AND MINTING CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED)
Mini-Ratna Category-1 CPSE Wholly owned by Government of India
Mint Compound: Saifabad, Hyderabad – 500 063
Ph:(+)91-40-23253606 Fax:(+)91-40-23456687 email:spp.hyd@spmcil.com
Website: https://spphyderabad.spmcil.com
No. SPP/HR/2024-25/1784 Date: 21-08-2024
VACANCY NOTICE
Security Printing Press, Hyderabad invites applications for filling up following post on fixed tenure contract basis for one year as per details given below:

Sl. No.	Name of post	No. of vacancies	Consolidated remuneration (p.m.)	Upper Age limit (as on last date of application)
1	Medical Officer	01	Rs. 63,000/-	**64 Years**

For complete details such as Qualification, age, experience, selection process, general information & instructions and other details including application form, please visit our website **https://spphyderabad.spmcil.com**.
Any change or Amendment to this vacancy notice will be posted on the SPP Hyd website only
Sd/-
Addl. General Manager (HR) & HOO
(For Chief General Manager)

Odisha State Medical Corporation Limited (OSMCL)
Assuring Quality, Saving Lives
In front of Ram Mandir, Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar-751 007
Tel.: 0674 - 2380608 / 2380662; Website: www.osmcl.nic.in ; Email: qaosmcl.od@nic.in
NOTICE FOR E-INVITATION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR EMPANELMENT OF DRUG TESTING LABORATORIES
EOI Ref.No. : OSMCL/QA/EOI/01/2024-25 **Date : 22.08.2024**
Online Bids through **e-Tender portal (https://tendersodisha.gov.in)** are invited from interested bidders for **Empanelment of Drug Testing Laboratories** as per the particulars mentioned below :

Sl. No.	Particulars	Date and Time	
1.	Date & time of release of bid	22.08.2024, 3 PM	
2.	Date & time of Pre-offer meeting	28.08.2024, 12:00 PM Venue: Conference Hall, Odisha State Medical Corporation Ltd., Convent Square, Unit-III, Bhubaneswar	
3.	Date & time of Online bid submission	Start Date & Time	End Date & Time
		04.09.2024, 3 PM	24.09.2024, 6 PM
4.	Date & Time for submission of EOI Documents as per Section-IV of EOI documents.	25.09.2024, 10 AM	04.10.2024 till 11 AM
5.	Date & time of Online Technical bid Opening	04.10.2024, 11:30 AM	
6.	Date of opening of Price Bid	To be informed to the qualified bidders	

The EOI document with all information relating to the bidding process including cost of EOI document, EMD, Pre-qualification criteria and terms & conditions are available in the websites: **www.osmcl.nic.in** and **https://tendersodisha.gov.in** . The Authority reserves the right to accept / reject any part thereof or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.
Sd/- Managing Director, OSMCL, Odisha
CAD-885 OIPR-10112/11/0007/2425

RESPECTFUL HOMAGE & FOND REMEMBRANCE
13.02.1918 22.08.1998
Shri. B.R. KAMDAR
KAMDAR FAMILY WITH STAFF & MANAGEMENT OF
NADI AIRTECHNICS PVT. LTD.
NADI TECHNOLOGIES PVT. LTD.

CENTRAL MINE PLANNING & DESIGN INSTITUTE LIMITED
(A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)
Gondwana Place, Kanke Road, Ranchi-834008, Jharkhand, India
NOTICE
"All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on websites of Coal India Ltd. **www.coalindia.in** /respective Subsidiary Company (CMPDI, **www.cmpdi.co.in**), CIL e-procurement portal **https://coalindiatenders.nic.in** and Central Public Procurement Portal **https://eprocure.gov.in.** In addition, procurement is also done through GeM Portal **https://gem.gov.in**"

OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF,
RURAL WATER SUPPLY & SANITATION,
JAL "O" PARIMAL BHAWAN, UNIT-V, BHUBANESWAR-751001, ODISHA
Tel: 0674-2395734, FAX: 0674-2394946, e-mail: cerwssodisha@gmail.com
Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) - NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING
BID IDENTIFICATION NO. EIC/RWS&S/02/2024-25 - NO. 8901 Date: 20.08.2024
The Engineer-in-Chief, RWS&S, Odisha, Bhubaneswar, on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites tenders in double cover system in ONLINE MODE only (from Registered Manufacture/ Authorized distributor/ Dealer) for Supply of Field-Testing Kits (FTK) 7000 nos. in different districts in the State.

1.	Cost of Bid Document	:	Rs. 10,000/- (non-refundable) to be remitted in online
2.	Class of Cotractor	:	Registered manufacturers / Authorized distributor / Dealer
3.	Availability of Bid Documents in the portal for Online Bidding	:	From 5 PM of 28.08.2024 to 17 hours of 18.09.2024.
4.	Date and place of pre bid meeting	:	At 11.30 A.M on dt. 04.09.2024 in the office of the EIC, RWS&S, Odisha, Bhubaneswar
5.	Date & Place of Receipt of hard copy of bid documents	:	19.09.2024 up to 17 hours in the Office of the EIC, RWS&S, Odisha, Bhubaneswar
6.	Date of opening of Bid in Online	:	20.09.2024 at 15 hours
7.	Mode of submission of tender	:	Tenders should be submitted online in www.tendersorissa.gov.in
8.	Name & address of Officer Inviting Bid	:	Engineer-in-Chief, RWS&S, Jal "O" Parimal Bhawan, Unit-V, Bhubaneswar Ph: 0674-2395734 / 0674- 2531533, e-mail:cerwssodisha@gmail.com
9.	The bidders have to participate in ONLINE Bidding only for which the bidder must possess compatible Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) of Class II or Class III. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal http://tendersorissa.gov.in		
10	Subsequent corrigendum if required shall be appeared in website		
11	Authority reserves the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason thereof.		

Name & address of officer inviting Bid : Engineer-in-Chief, RWSS Jal "O" Parimal Bhawan, Unit-V, Bhubaneswar. Ph: 0674-2395734/ 0674-2531533. e-mail: cerwssodisha@gmail.com
Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal : http://tendersodisha.gov.in
Engineer-in-Chief, RWSS
O-208: OIPR-25040/11/0002/2425

INBRIEF

SC to decide if LMV licence includes transport vehicles

A Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud reserved its judgment on the question whether a person holding a driving licence for a light motor vehicle (LMV) is entitled to drive a transport vehicle with an unladen weight not exceeding 7,500 kg. The reference to the five-judge Bench followed disputes over payment of claims by insurance companies in accident cases involving transport vehicles being driven by those possessing licences to drive LMVs. The courts have been adopting a pro-insured approach while deciding insurance claim disputes, the insurance firms have said.

Masked men fire at house of Manipur college principal

The house of a college principal in Manipur has been attacked twice in a month. The police said two scooter-borne masked men fired five rounds from automatic weapons at the house of Wahengbam Nimai, the principal of Kamakhya Pemton College in Bishnupur, on Tuesday evening. No one claimed responsibility for the attack. On July 17, miscreants lobbed a hand grenade near the gate of the principal's residence. It failed to explode and was disposed of by a special squad. No group claimed responsibility for that attack too, although lobbing grenades has been associated with extortion by extremist outfits in the past.

Search for missing plane continues in Jharkhand

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

A two-seater aircraft that went missing in Jamshedpur on Monday is yet to be located. The search and rescue operations on Wednesday failed to trace either the aircraft debris or its occupants.

On Monday, the Cessna 152 aircraft of flying training school Alchemist Aviation took off from the Sonari aerodrome in Jamshedpur around 10 a.m. with an instructor and trainee pilot aboard. Later, it vanished off the Ranchi radar and is suspected to have crashed.

"We are still into the search operation. Some eyewitnesses claimed that they saw the aircraft falling into the Chandil dam. We have called the National Disaster Response Force and they are searching for the aircraft," Deputy Commissioner of Seraikela-Kharsawan Ravi Shankar Shukla told *The Hindu* over phone.

It is not known why the Emergency Locator Transmitters (ELT) in the aircraft was not triggered. The device is designed to help rescuers find aircraft and people in distress after an aircraft hits terrain or drowns in a waterbody.

'WHO investigating suspected new polio strain in Meghalaya'

Health Department officials in Meghalaya have been on high alert since a poliomyelitis case was diagnosed in a two-year-old child from Tikrikilla

The Hindu Bureau
GUWAHATI

Meghalaya Health Minister Mazel Ampareen Lyngdoh on Wednesday said the World Health Organization (WHO) was conducting a thorough investigation to determine if a new strain of polio has infected a two-year-old child at Tikrikilla in West Garo Hills district of the State.

Though the State government is awaiting the sample test reports from laboratories in Kolkata and Mumbai, the Union Health Ministry said the child's case was not that of wild polio but a vaccine-derived infection that presents in some people with low immunity. The test reports are expected by the end of the week.

"Another case has apparently been identified in some other State. It is a different strain of polio to my understanding but WHO is investigating the case further for certainty," Dr. Lyngdoh said.

The WHO declared India polio-free in 2014 after the last case of wild poliovirus was reported in 2011. C. VENKATACHALAPATHY

She said the State government and the Health Department had been closely monitoring the situation at Tikrikilla, where people have a history of opposing vaccination. "The child is under observation and we are in touch with the family. The doctors attending to the child said the child is okay," she said, observing that the case may impact vaccination efforts in the future. The Minister did not rule out the possibility of the WHO issuing an advisory if the new strain is confirmed. The WHO declared India polio-free in 2014 after the last case of wild poliovirus was reported in 2011.

Health officials in Meghalaya have been on high alert after the emergence of the poliomyelitis case from Tikrikilla.

While the oral polio vaccine has helped eliminate wild polio, the live virus in the vaccine can mutate and lead to vaccine-derived poliovirus, which can cause polio in unvaccinated individuals or in areas with low immunisation coverage.

Centre issues office memorandum on National Task Force

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Union Health Ministry on Wednesday issued an office memorandum for the constitution of the National Task Force (NTF) to formulate protocols governing the safety of doctors.

This is following a Supreme Court order on Tuesday.

The Cabinet Secretary will be the Chairperson of the task force that will provide recommendations regarding the safety, working conditions, and well-being of medical professionals and other related matters.

As per the memorandum, the NTF shall prepare an action plan categorised under two heads –prevention of violence against medical professionals, and providing safe working conditions and providing an enforceable national protocol for dignified and safe working conditions for interns, residents, senior residents, doctors, nurses, and all medical professionals.

Additionally, healthcare institutes are required to conduct workshops for all employees of medical establishments.

TISS Registrar Sutar appoints himself as administration head

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In an office order issued by himself, Anil Sutar, Registrar of the Mumbai-based Tata Institute of Social Sciences, has declared himself professor and head of administration.

Mr. Sutar, in the order, said the role of the officiating Registrar would now be discharged by Narendra Mishra, who will directly report to Mr. Sutar, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and the Vice-Chancellor. A faculty member, on condition of anonymity, said, "This is a case of Anil Sutar, making himself more powerful."

SC to examine need for environmental regulator

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Another regulator would only add another layer and cause duplication, says Additional Solicitor-General

The Supreme Court on Wednesday decided to examine the need for a 'permanent environmental regulator' similar to those found in the telecom and electricity sectors.

"There is a regulator in telecom [Telecom Regulatory Authority of India] and electricity [Central Electricity Regulatory Commission]...like that for climate and environment," said Justice K.V. Viswanathan, who was accompanying Justices B.R. Gavai and P.K. Mishra on the Bench. Justice Gavai was heading the Bench.

Amicus curiae, senior advocate K. Parameshwar, submitted that regulators in separate areas covering various fields of environment and climate change were operating in silos.

"Would Your Lordships combine all these regulators into a behemoth, which would do the overall monitoring?" Mr. Parameshwar asked.

Centre's view

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati said the Union government had a "mixed response" to the issue.

Ms. Bhati said the existing system had specific regulators who were experts in their fields of environmental and climate change study.

There were several tiers in decision-making and review, including the Ministries concerned, the National Green Tribunal, the Central Empowered Committee and finally the Supreme Court itself.

"Another regulator would only add another layer. It would be a duplication, and anyway, issues have to go to experts. For wildlife, we have the standing committee of the National Board for Wildlife," Ms. Bhati explained.

The Bench decided to hear the issue extensively on November 20.

Mining activities

Justice Gavai's Bench, in a separate application, also asked the Centre to consider whether mining activities could be prohibited in areas declared conservation reserves and community reserves.

"We request the Union to consider whether at least in the areas which are declared as conservation reserves and community reserves, the mining could be prohibited or not," the Bench said.

'Manipur CM's audio clips establish his complicity'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Ten Kuki-Zo MLAs in Manipur issued a statement on Wednesday, saying they had taken note of the leaked audio clips, alleged to be of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh.

They said it established his complicity in the ethnic conflict "beyond an iota of doubt", demanding that the Commission of Inquiry set up by the Centre to expedite its process to prosecute Mr. Singh "for his crimes if his guilt is established". They also called for his removal as Chief Minister so that he can be stopped from "influencing the outcome of the probe against him".

They claimed the tapes' authenticity had been confirmed by Rojendro Nong, who the MLAs said, was Mr. Singh's brother.

72 held for rioting, damaging public property in Badlapur

Snehal Mutha
MUMBAI

Following the massive protest at the Badlapur railway station in Maharashtra's Thane district over the alleged sexual abuse of two four-year-old girls at a school, first information reports have been filed against at least 300 protesters and 72 have been arrested, the police said.

Sudhakar Pathare, Badlapur Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), told *The Hindu*, "Police arrested 40 people and 32 were held by the Government Railway Police. We are scrutinising the CCTV footage from the railway station and nearby locations to make more arrests. At least 15 police personnel were injured due to stone throwing."

Mr. Pathare said the arrested persons were charged under non-bailable Sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita for alleged rioting and damaging public property.

Police speak with people blocking railway tracks in protest against the alleged sexual assault incident of two minors in Badlapur ANI

'Delay' stirs protests

Thousands of people protested on Tuesday citing "delay" in the police registering complaint against the 24-year-old accused, who allegedly sexually abused two minors during school hours on August 12.

After his arrest on August 17, he was produced before a magistrate at Kalyan on Wednesday and sent to police custody till August 26.

Education Minister Deepak Kesarkar on Wednesday appointed a government administrator to manage the school.

The Maharashtra State Commission for Protection of Child Rights chief, Susieben Shah, highlighting the systemic failure in the Badlapur case, told *The Hindu* that notices were issued to the school and police officials to explain the delay in taking action.

Parties must brainstorm on women's safety: Rahul

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said that crimes like the Badlapur sexual assault forces one to think "where are we heading as a society".

In a post on X, Mr. Gandhi said "all governments and parties need to brainstorm on what steps should be taken to provide a safe environment for women".

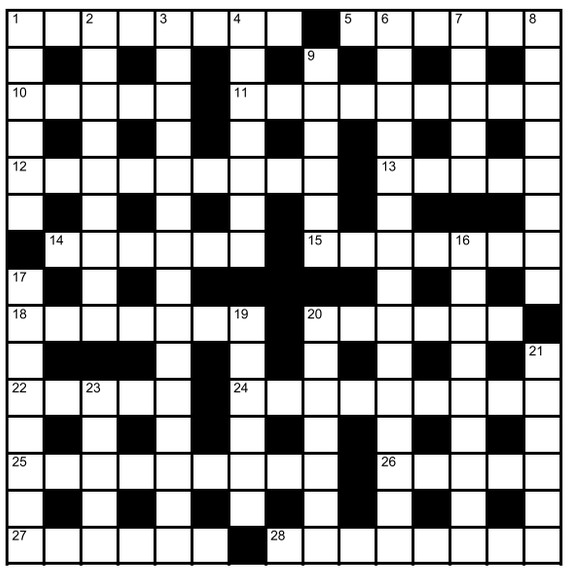
"After West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the shameful crimes against young girls in Maharashtra also force us to think where are we heading as a society? After the crime against two innocents in Badlapur, the first step to give them justice was not taken until the public came out on the streets demanding justice," he said.

TH CROSSWORD + 14260

(set by Dr. X)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Most immature hanky-panky finally gets tongues wagging (8)
5 Embraced by chief for terrific work (6)
10 Complicated idea by unionist is so long (5)
11 Corrected errors by fellows before meeting held by editor (9)
12 Frantic with irritation after LSD at rave (4-5)
13 Developer illegally concealing hazard (5)
14 Mother turned miserable after eating a little rancid curry (6)
15 Small tapering objects around hundred candlesticks (7)
18 Recalled fling on island, captivated by woman in red (7)
20 Familiar with a book about origin of humans (2,4)
22 Recognise fish finally in aquarium (5)
24 Hearts captured by poor emigrant's ordeal (9)
25 Misbehaves in vehicle, upsetting senior (7,2)
26 Endure a little scare during flight (5)
27 Invests in US Energy foolishly after tip (6)
28 Enthralled by potions, she recollected ancient curses (8)

Down

1 Annual Day finally on first (6)
2 Partners crack system entirely to remove software from computer (9)
3 Bad knee, friend? Ought to have surgery (2,5,3,5)
4 Ruthless criminal runs away - getting bloodhounds (7)
6 Extremely annoyed as a result of overeating? (3,2,2,3,5)
7 Remote network device, unopened (5)
8 Agenda given by director in agency. it's elaborate (2-2,4)
9 Engages in drug abuse finally, crushed by failure (6)
16 Bell tower in base beside a river in Africa (9)
17 Rum, best with cola in bar (8)
19 Adoption of female dress by a male in some dances (6)
20 Half of army lost defending northern region of France (7)
21 The sad, horrific fatalities (6)
23 Biting cold in desert (5)

SUDOKU

9		2		3	7			
	6			5	2			
			1					
		8			1		9	2
	2	5				1	8	
3	9		4			5		
					5			
			7	8			5	
			3	6		2		1

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★☆☆

No.SS6258 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

Solution to previous puzzle

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

4	6	3	7	8	9	2	1	5
1	2	9	3	5	6	7	8	4
5	8	7	1	4	2	3	9	6
9	1	8	4	6	3	5	7	2
6	7	5	2	9	1	4	3	8
2	3	4	8	7	5	9	6	1
8	4	2	6	3	7	1	5	9
3	9	1	5	2	8	6	4	7
7	5	6	9	1	4	8	2	3

FAITH

Significance of prapatti

Bhakti and prapatti (surrender) are both ways to reach the Supreme One's feet. But there are inherent difficulties in bhakti as a means to attain moksha. Bhakti should be without a break, like the flow of oil. Our last thoughts, at the end of our lives, should be of Him. If the last thoughts are not about Him, then one's bhakti throughout one's life will not result in moksha. Considering these difficulties in bhakti as a means to liberation, we need something easier for us to practice. That is where total surrender scores, said Kazhiyur B. Devarajan in a discourse.

We have to admit to the Lord our own helplessness in attaining moksha, and seek His help. Having surrendered, we must not think of obtaining any result for ourselves. We are His property. In this case, the property, that is the atma, waits to be claimed by Him. There are no geographical or time constraints for surrender. Anyone can do saranagati. When we resort to other methods, we may not be sure of success. But in Saranagati, once a person surrenders, moksha is guaranteed. None can stop Lord Narayana once He decides to save us. But why would He want to save us, when we have accumulated a huge bundle of sins? He is like the royal elephant, which chooses the future king by garlanding him. The elephant may choose a totally unqualified person. None can question its choice.

INBRIEF

Sports brand Decathlon mulls €100 million India investment

Decathlon, a global multi-specialist sports brand, has announced to invest €100 million in India over the next five years. "This investment will be channelled towards expanding the store network to reach 190 stores across India, enhancing digital engagement, and deepening its commitment to local manufacturing," the company announced in New Delhi. "India has emerged as a pivotal market for Decathlon, exhibiting remarkable growth," it added.

NBFCs' growth to soften to 13-15% in FY25 from 18%: ICRA

Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) will witness headwinds related to funding availability, which is likely to impede growth vis-a-vis the robust expansion in the last two fiscals, ICRA said on Wednesday. The credit rating agency projected the growth of NBFCs' assets under management (AUM) to ease to 13-15% in FY25 from 18% in FY24. Standing at about ₹47 lakh crore in March 2024, the sector's AUM is set to cross ₹50 lakh crore in FY25, it added.

TI Clean Mobility delivers 5,000th Montra electric auto

TI Clean Mobility Pvt. Ltd. announced it had delivered 5,000 Montra electric three-wheeler passenger autos within a year of its introduction across 74 markets spanning 17 States. "We are proud to have achieved this significant milestone of delivering 5,000 Super Autos within a year of our launch. This achievement is a testament to Montra Electric's dedication to driving the electric mobility revolution in India," said Montra Electric 3Ws Business Head Roy Kurian.

'Rapid e-com growth could hit millions of retail stores and jobs'

Goyal red flags predatory pricing policies, faster growth in high-margin items' online sales; questions some of Amazon's business practices

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Wednesday raised questions about the business and pricing strategies of major e-commerce players like Amazon in India, and dismissed a report that concluded e-tailers' growth did not pose a significant risk to employment opportunities in the country.

Although he acknowledged that e-commerce was here to stay, the Minister stressed that the sector's growth must be 'orderly' and 'citizen-centric', and its role must be cautiously mulled over.

"Are predatory pricing policies good for the country?... I don't see it as a matter of pride that half our market could be driven by e-commerce 10 years from now. It's a matter of concern," he said.

"Are we going to cause huge social disruption with this massive growth of e-commerce?" he asked, referring to the detrimental effects of online retailers eating into the business prospects of 100 million small retailers across the country.

Speaking at the release of a report on the "Net Impact of E-Commerce on Employment and Consumer Welfare in India", issued jointly by EY India and Pahle India Foundation, Mr. Goyal completely dissociated himself from its findings.

> They create entities where Indians contribute to the creation of those entities, then they get caught and shut down those entities
> **PIYUSH GOYAL**
> Commerce and Industry Minister

The report's conclusions seemed to be driven by the "urge to show" that e-commerce hasn't had an impact on employment, the Minister said.

Beyond traditional e-commerce, the Minister also flagged concerns about the impact of cloud kitchens and online food delivery apps on restaurants.

Amazon worries

"When Amazon says we are going to invest a billion dollars in India, and we all celebrate, we forget the underlying story that that billion dollars is not coming in for any great service or any great investment to support the Indian economy, they made a billion dollar loss in their balance sheet... If you make ₹6,000 crore in losses in one year, doesn't that smell of predatory pricing to any of you?" the Minister asked.

Noting that the company apparently spent $1 billion paying professionals in India, the Minister mused that the firm may have spent the money to retain the country's top lawyers "so there's nobody left to fight" against them.

"What is that loss? As an e-commerce platform, they are not allowed to do B2C [business to consumer] transactions," Mr. Goyal said, apparently referring to Press Note 3 of 2016, a regulation that prohibits e-commerce firms holding their own inventory of goods, from receiving foreign direct investment.

"They create entities where Indians contribute to the creation of those entities, then they get caught and shut down those entities. But they only re-route all the business through an entity to show that it's business to business," Mr. Goyal stressed.

"But the reality is all of you buy on these platforms. But B2C is not allowed on these platforms. How are they doing this? Should this not be a matter of concern for all of us?" the Minister underlined.

Corporate hiring slid steeply in FY24: BoB

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

Hiring by corporate India slowed dramatically in FY24, according to a study by Bank of Baroda (BoB), which noted that jobs grew by a mere 1.5% last year compared with 5.7% in FY23 among a sample of 1,196 firms. The sample included only large and medium firms.

The top five firms with the most headcount a year earlier ended up reporting lower employee numbers in FY24, according to BoB.

The bank said higher numbers in 2022-23 was on account of a lower base set by the pandemic. "A reason for this slowdown is that FY23 was the first post pandemic year when there was a certain degree of voluntary and involuntary displacement of staff. Therefore, there was a tendency for growth in employment to be higher in FY23 as activity was ramped up. The same necessity was not felt in FY24 resulting in a lower growth rate," BoB observed in its report.

Sectoral trends showed broad divergence with the highest job growth (in terms of head count) of about 19.4% seen in the retail sector. Headcount shrank the most in hospitality and logistics with a 12% dip in each industry.

Use simple language in tax notices, says FM

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday asked tax officers to use simpler words in notices they send to taxpayers and exercise powers bestowed on them judiciously.

Addressing the 165th Income Tax Day celebrations, Ms. Sitharaman said after adopting the faceless regime, tax officers must now aspire to be more "fair and friendly" in their dealings with taxpayers.

Tax notices must not trigger a "sense of fear" among taxpayers. Instead, it must be straightforward, she added.

Nirmala Sitharaman

The notice must make "crystal clear" to the assessee the reason for it.

Ms. Sitharaman also sought refunds to be issued faster. She asked authorities to use enforcement measures as a last resort, adding the department's goal must be to encourage voluntary compliance.

MARKETS

MARKET WATCH

	WEDNESDAY	%CHANGE
Sensex	80,905	0.13
US Dollar	83.90	-0.15
Gold	74,150	0.00
Brent oil	76.44	-1.16

NIFTY 50

	PRICE	CHANGE
Adani Enter	3115.70	45.05
Adani Ports	1503.50	10.95
Apollo Hosp	6752.45	79.55
Asian Paints	3151.55	48.35
Axis Bank	1174.40	6.40
Bajaj Auto	9852.00	72.30
Bajaj Finserv	1620.95	18.85
Bajaj Finance	6735.35	13.15
Bharti Airtel	1463.45	14.30
BPCL	351.20	1.80
Britannia Ind	5837.35	71.55
Cipla	1594.60	31.75
Coal India	532.20	7.60
Divis Lab	4900.80	177.65
Dr Reddys Lab	7062.45	97.10
Eicher Motors	4913.55	30.30
Grasim Ind	2684.85	48.15
HCL Tech	1677.25	-9.50
HDFC Bank	1625.80	-11.90
HDFC Life	724.55	13.95
Hero MotoCorp	5284.70	40.30
Hindalco	685.60	12.70
Hind Unilever	2791.20	40.15
ICICI Bank	1174.85	-4.60
IndusInd Bank	1384.00	2.70
Infosys	1872.70	0.50
ITC	505.40	6.60
JSW Steel	925.80	8.65
Kotak Bank	1812.95	7.30
L&T	3596.05	23.35
LTIMindtree Ltd.	5713.45	5.65
M&M	2769.40	-1.90
Maruti Suzuki	12220.95	6.00
NestleIndia	2551.75	33.25
NTPC	408.95	2.70
ONGC	327.70	-2.40
PowerGrid Corp	336.65	-3.85
Reliance Ind	2997.35	5.45
SBI Life	1800.60	39.30
State Bank	815.55	-4.75
Shriram Finance Ltd.	3159.05	-0.80
Sun Pharma	1764.65	-1.70
TataConsumerProduct	1177.55	6.35
Tata Motors	1085.20	-1.70
Tata Steel	151.92	-2.01
TCS	4551.50	28.20
Tech Mahindra	1604.65	-23.95
Titan	3560.40	85.50
UltraTech Cement	11200.90	-148.80
Wipro	526.35	1.70

EXCHANGE RATES

Indicative direct rates in rupees a unit except yen at 4 p.m. on August 21

CURRENCY	TT BUY	TT SELL
US Dollar	83.72	84.04
Euro	93.06	93.43
British Pound	109.13	109.55
Japanese Yen (100)	57.30	57.53
Chinese Yuan	11.73	11.78
Swiss Franc	97.84	98.22
Singapore Dollar	64.05	64.30
Canadian Dollar	61.55	61.79
Malaysian Ringitt	19.10	19.21
Australian Dollar	56.42	56.64

Source:Indian Bank

Lack of industries in Bihar push youth to vie for government jobs

JOB SCENARIO

Amarnath Tewary

"Karo to sarkari naukari, nahi to becho tarkari" (do only government job, else sell vegetable), says Ranjeet Kumar (28), an unemployed youth, who, along with two female companions, spend three hours at a community park in Rajendra Nagar in Patna every evening to prepare for government jobs.

"Here in the park, there is a peaceful atmosphere to hold group discussions which help us prepare better for the job," they echoed looking at the question bank for Bihar government's Staff Selection Commission (SSC) exam.

Mr. Kumar had cracked the examination thrice but, somehow, couldn't make it to the final list.

'Huge pressure'

"Again I'm waiting for the final list, hoping to get through this time. Pressure from family to get a government job is so immense that for the last five years I've confined myself to a single room in Bahadurpur of Patna paying ₹6,000 as rent every month. He hails from Jhajha, some 300 km from Patna.

Asked why only a government job, Mr. Kumar sported a smile and responded quickly, "because there is nothing as permanent as a government job in the State and the country as well".

Agreeing with him is Arpana Barnwal (26) who has come to Patna from Bokaro in the neighboring State of Jharkhand to prepare for a government job.

"Age is running out, not for job but for marriage", she giggled and the "family pressure to get a job as early as possible is so intense that I came to Patna for better opportunities to prepare for government jobs and here, there is 33% reservation in jobs for women," she said.

Cause for concern: Unemployment rate in Bihar was at 5.9%, higher than the national average of 4.1%, as per PLFS 2021-22. ANI

She has to pay ₹3,500 as room rent in Patna's Kazipur locality of Macchuatoli area. Her friend and companion Preeti Kumari (30), who is married, had also cracked main examination for Police Sub-Inspector (SI) post twice but, 'unfortunately' she too couldn't make it to the final list.

She again is preparing for the job and unless she makes it to the final list, she asserted, she would keep trying for the government job.

'Rare opportunities'

"I along with my husband, who too is preparing for a government job, have come from Begusarai district and live in a rented room at Bazaar Samiti area of Patna for better preparation," she said, adding, "life is very very difficult without a government job in a place like Bihar where opportunities are very rare."

But what are these examinations? "We prepare for Bihar SSC, Bihar police -SI/Constable, Nursing, Teachers through Bihar Public Service Commission (BPSC), Assistant Section Officer in State Secretariat, Railways - loco-pilot and Group-D, National Thermal Power Corporation etc.," they said.

What do they expect the government to do? "First, they should strictly maintain the job calendar, stop regular exam paper leaks and the number of jobs must be increased."

Filling up posts

According to State Budget for the financial year 2023-24, requisition has been given for filling a total of 63,900 posts by BPSC, SSC and the Technical Service Commission.

Approval has been accorded for the creation of 75, 543 posts in State police services. According to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) for the year 2021-22, unemployment rate in Bihar was at 5.9%, higher than the national average of 4.1%. For the 15-29 age group, the unemployment rate was 20.1%, against the national average of 12.4%.

As per PLFS 20-21, the unemployment rate in the State was 4.6%. The Union government on July 29, cited data in Parliament stating Bihar had the lowest (25.6%) worker population ratio in 2021-22.

'Lack of industries'

Former director of Patna-based A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Sciences D. M. Diwakar told *The Hindu* that "the major reason behind high unemployment rate in Bihar is the lack of industries. So, agriculture continues to have a crucial space in the State's economy. Lack of employment opportunities have also pushed lakhs of migrants into leaving their native State for livelihood."

'No' clarity

He also asserted there has not been any "clarity in government, neither of State nor at the Centre on job creation."

"*Hindu rashtra banana hai to job create karne ki jarurat kya hai?* (when the agenda is to make Hindu nation, what is the need for job creation?)," he asked.

Economist and Associate Professor of Bihar Institute of Public Finance and Policy, Sudhanshu Kumar agreed, "employment scenario of the youth in the State was disturbing".

"The youth of the State are mostly engaged in the informal economy and survive through subsistence self-employment or through casual jobs".

"In urban areas, people settle for jobs that are way below their expertise, while disguised employment is common in rural Bihar," he told *The Hindu*.

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OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER
No.10, Kautilya Marg, Karnataka Bhavan-1 (Cauvery), Chanakyapuri, New Delhi-110 021
No: KB/KET/1/2023-ARC-Karnataka Bhavan/351 Date: 20.08.2024
E-TENDER NOTICATION
(Through Karnataka e-Procurement portal only)
Sub: Tender through e-Procurement for Providing Hiring of Taxis Services to Karnataka Bhavan. Office of Resident Commissioner, Government of Karnataka, "Karnataka Bhavan" has invited tender through e-Procurement for **Hiring of Taxis Services to Karnataka Bhavan from eligible firms/agencies.** Eproc Portal-**https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** Tender Reference No: DPAR/2024-25/SE0032 Publish Date: 19.08.2024. Last date for submission of tender: **31.08.2024, 17:30 Hrs.**
Sd/- Additional Resident Commissioner
DIPR/DD-C.P/1583/KSMCA/2024-25

NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
Sr. DEE-TRD & GSU/JP, acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders for following works. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. **SN. 1 NIT No:** EL-GSU-JP-2024-25-03; **Name of work:** TRD Work in connection with proposed cross-over of Line-3-4 and 100 mtr dead end extension of Line-2, 5 at KKU yard of Jaipur Division. **NIT cost (Rs.):** 92,68,772.77; **Bid security (Rs.):** 1,85,400.00; **Tender opening date:** 09.09.2024; **Note: Date & time of closing e-tenders:** On tender opening date Upto 15.00 hrs; **Date & time of opening e-tenders:** On tender opening date after 15.00 hrs; **Complete details of tender can be seen on website: http://www.ireps.gov.in 971-AN/24**
Please join us on /NWRailways

WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY
Mechanical Branch Open Tender Single Packet System
TENDER NOTICE No: - JBP-M-Tender-18-2024 dated 16/08/2024
E- Tender on behalf of the President of India acting through Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Chg.) / Divisional Railway Manager (Mechanical), West Central Railway, Jabalpur for the following work:- **NIT No** . JBP-M-Tender-18-2024 dated 16/08/2024 **Name of work with location-** Surface defect detection by Eddy current Array on LHB Wheel at coaching depot Jabalpur **Approx cost of the work -** Rs 7118539.20/-, **Earnest Money to be deposited -** Rs. 142400.00/-, **Tender Form Cost -** Rs. Nil, **Completion period** - 36 Months, Last date & Time for Submission of Tender (Upto 11:00hrs.) - .09.09.2024 Up to 11:00 Hrs, Date & Time for Opening of Tender - 09.09.2024 at 11:30 Hrs. The complete information of the above E-tenders is available in website on "https://ireps.gov.in" and also placed on the notice board of the Divisional Railway Manager (Mech) office of West Central Railway Jabalpur. Tenders other than in the form of e-bid shall not be accepted against above tenders.
DRM (MECH)
West Central Railway, Jabalpur
स्वच्छ भारत अभियान
एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

झारखण्ड सरकार
कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, हजारीबाग
ई– अल्पकालीन निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना
ई–निविदा सं0 :– **RE-RDSPL/SD/HZB/10/2024-25 (2nd call)**
1. कार्य की विस्तृत विवरणी:

ग्रुप सं0	आईडेन्टीफिकेशन संख्या / पैकेज संख्या	प्रखण्ड	योजना का नाम	प्राक्कलित राशि	अग्रधन की राशि	परिमाण विपत्र का मूल्य	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1.	RE-RDSPL/SD/HZB /10/01/2024-25	बड़कागांव	ग्राम नापोखुर्द में खेराढ़ नदी में पुलिया का निर्माण।	9922700.00	198500.00	10000.00	9 माह
2.	RE-RDSPL/SD/HZB /10/03/2024-25	बड़कागांव	पंचायत बड़कागांव मध्य अंतर्गत अंबेदकर चौक काली मंदिर से गैस गोदाम होते हुए बाजार तक पीसीसी पथ निर्माण।	7610400.00	152300.00	10000.00	6 माह

2. वेबसाइट में निविदा प्रकाशन की तिथि – 08.09.2024
3. ई–निविदा प्राप्ति की तिथि एवं समय – दिनांक 08.09.2024 से दिनांक 18.09.2024 को अपराह्न 5:00 बजे तक
4. ई–निविदा खोलने का स्थान – कार्यपालक अभियंता का कार्यालय, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमण्डल, हजारीबाग
5. ई–निविदा खोलने की तिथि एवं समय –20.09.2024 अपराह्न 2:00 बजे
6. ई–निविदा आमंत्रित करने वाले पदाधिकारी का नाम एवं पता :– कार्यपालक अभियंता, ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल, हजारीबाग
7. ई–निविदा प्रकोष्ठ का दूरभाष सं० – 9430154806
8. परिमाण विपत्र की राशि घट–बढ़ सकती है तद्नुसार अग्रधन की राशि देय होगी।
9. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि केवल Online Mode द्वारा स्वीकार्य होगी।
10. निविदा शुल्क एवं अग्रधन की राशि का ई–भुगतान जिस खाता से किया जायेगा, उसी खाते में अग्रधन की राशि वापस होगी।
विस्तृत जानकारी के लिये वेबसाईट www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं कार्यालय की सूचना पट्ट पर देखा जा सकता है।
कार्यपालक अभियंता
ग्रामीण विकास विशेष प्रमंडल,
हजारीबाग
PR 333357 (Rural Development) 24-25 (D)

JHARKHAND BIJLI VITRAN NIGAM LIMITED
CIN :-U40108JH2013SGC001702
Regd. Office:- Engineering Building, HEC, Dhurwa, Ranchi–834004.
Email-ID :- cesd.jseb@gmail.com
Short E-Tender Notice
(Through e-procurement mode only www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in)
Online short e-tender is invited for work of Repair/Replacement and Maintenance of defective 33/11 kV Power Substation Equipment under JBVNL including supply of spare parts and Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) works for 2 years.

Sl. No.	NIT No.	Name of Area Board	Estimate value (incl. GST Rs). (In Crs.)	EMD value (Incl. GST) (Rs. In Crs.)	Tender Cost (Incl. GST) (In Rs.)	Downloading/ Sale of Tender Document	Last Date of submission of Tender Document	Date of Opening of Tender
1.	106/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Ranchi	31.04	0.62	11,800	22.08.24	06.09.24 up to 03:00 PM	09.09.24 after 03:00 PM
2	107/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Jamshedpur	22.13	0.44				
3	108/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Hazaribagh	10.13	0.20				
4	109/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Giridih	17.33	0.35				
5	110/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Dhanbad	7.64	0.15				
6	111/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Dumka	9.91	0.02				
7	112/PR/ JBVNL /24-25	Medininagar	10.08	0.02				

Further details against the above Tender can be obtained from website http:jharkhandtenders.gov.in and may be contacted on Mobile No. 8709711244/ 8936066052/ NIC helpline No. 0651-2400178. Submission of bid document fee and EMD will be accepted through online mode only and it's receipt should be submitted to the office of undersigned on or before 06.09.2024.
स्वहित एवं राष्ट्रहित में ऊर्जा बचावें। कृपया अपनी शिकायतों को टॉल फ्री नं० 1800 345 6570 पर दर्ज करायें।
PR.NO.333339 Jharkhand Bijlee Vitran Nigam Ltd(24-25):D
Sd/-
General Manager (STN) JBVNL

ISLAMABAD

UAE accepts Afghanistan envoy in a major diplomatic win for Taliban

AP

The United Arab Emirates on Wednesday accepted the credentials of the Taliban's Ambassador to the oil-rich Gulf Arab state Badruddin Haqqani (first from right), in what is perceived as the biggest diplomatic coup for Afghanistan's rulers who are not officially recognised as the country's legitimate government.AP

MOSCOW

Russia comes under one of the largest drone attacks by Ukraine

REUTERS

Moscow came under one of the largest attacks by Ukrainian drones since the start of fighting in 2022, Russian authorities reported on Wednesday, saying they destroyed all of those headed toward the capital. Russia said it downed 45 Ukrainian drones overnight, including 11 over the Moscow region. AP

MANILA

Philippines says new mpox case detected is 'not' a deadly variant

AFP

The first mpox case reported by the Philippines this year is a mild variant and not the deadly strain sparking global alarm, officials said on Wednesday. The highly transmissible Clade 1b strain of the virus has killed hundreds in DR Congo and has also been detected Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and Sweden. AFP

SARAJEVO

Bosnia high school staffer shoots dead three colleagues: police

REUTERS

Three high school employees were shot dead on Wednesday at a school in northwest Bosnia by a co-worker who then tried to kill himself, police said. The shooting occurred around 10 a.m. local time in Sanski Most as teachers held a meeting to prepare for the upcoming school year and no students were present. AFP

Obama endorses Harris at Democrats' party meeting

U.S. is ready for Harris's presidency, he says; in a throwback to his campaign slogan, Obama states "Yes she can" about the Vice-President; Michelle Obama stresses on 'the contagious power of hope'

Agence France-Presse
CHICAGO

Barack Obama told fellow Democrats in Chicago on Tuesday that "the torch has been passed" to Kamala Harris and that the U.S. was ready for her to become President.

Former President Obama, who was greeted with rapturous applause and cheers at the packed arena hosting the party's nominating convention, said Vice-President Harris would fight for Americans, and called her November poll rival Donald Trump "dangerous."

"Kamala Harris is ready for the job. This is a person who has spent her life fighting for people who need a voice," he said.

"Yes she can," Mr. Obama said of Ms. Harris, prompting the boisterous crowd to repeatedly chant the phrase, recalling Mr. Obama's own "Yes we can" campaign slogan.

Partners in campaign: Kamala Harris and running mate Tim Walz during a campaign rally in Milwaukee on Tuesday. AP

His wife and former U.S. First Lady Michelle Obama told convention goers "something magically wonderful is in the air."

"It's the contagious power of hope," she said, calling Ms. Harris "my girl" and saying that hope – another rallying cry of her husband's successful 2008 campaign – "is making a comeback."

In personal remarks shifting the focus onto Ms. Harris's qualities, her husband, Second Gentleman Doug Emhoff, told the convention "she is ready."

With the party united and Ms. Harris polling strongly, Democrats are making clear they believe they can defeat Mr. Trump.

Bangladesh interim govt. to revoke diplomatic passports issued during Hasina era

Kallol Bhattacherjee
DHAKA

The interim government of Bangladesh has decided to revoke all diplomatic passports issued to the members of parliament who served during the Awami League government, the security branch of the Home Ministry of Bangladesh informed on Wednesday evening.

The decision implies that the diplomatic passport used by Ms. Hasina while fleeing to India has now been revoked. "The security service of the Home Ministry has taken this decision after consulting all stakeholders and has already alerted all emigration counters of the country," the Home Ministry declared in a statement shared with the media here.

Sheikh Hasina

A formal order will be issued 'at the earliest', the notification declared. Ms. Hasina had won from Gopalganj-3 constituency to enter the Jatiyo Sansad in the January election as a re-elected MP.

The decision taken two weeks after formation of the interim government has highlighted the antipathy that the interim administration and the student leaders have been expressing over the presence of Ms. Hasina in India.

India silent

Ms. Hasina and her sister Sheikh Rehana left Dhaka on August 5 noon as protesters flooded Dhaka. The Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi has been tight-lipped about the diplomatic status that Ms. Hasina used to seek refuge in the country though it is understood that as the Prime Minister of Bangladesh she owned a diplomatic passport that she used while leaving for India.

Dhaka to press with its demands for Teesta waters

Kallol Bhattacherjee
DHAKA

Bangladesh may consider approaching an international platform for resolving the Teesta waters dispute, Syeda Rizwana Hasan, adviser on water, forest, environment and climate change of the new interim government, said in Dhaka on Wednesday.

Addressing a press interaction here, Ms. Hasan referred to the assertive stance taken by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee regarding the Teesta, and said the current administration in Bangladesh led by Nobel laureate Mohammed Yunus will take up the issues related to shared rivers between the two countries "forcefully".

Vote puts Ukraine a step closer to ICC membership

Reuters
KYIV

Ukraine's parliament voted on Wednesday to ratify the Rome Statute, officials said, allowing the country to join the International Criminal Court (ICC) in a step Ukrainian leaders have cast as central to Kyiv's plans of becoming part of Europe.

Ukraine has recognised the ICC's jurisdiction in the past, but full membership of the court is a key part of Ukraine's quest to eventually join the European Union.

It would also allow authorities "to more effectively punish" suspected Russian war criminals amid Moscow's war on Ukraine, according to lawmaker Oleksiy Honcharenko.

Israel kills Palestinian militant as Gaza truce talks stumble

Agence France-Presse
SIDON, LEBANON

Israel killed a senior militant from Fatah's armed wing on Wednesday in a strike on Lebanon, leading to accusations from the Palestinian movement that Israel is trying to "ignite a regional war".

Fatah, the Palestinian movement based in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, said Khalil Maqdah was killed in a strike near the southern Lebanese city of Sidon.

Wider war

The Israeli military said it targeted the brother of Mounir Maqdah, who heads the Lebanese branch of Fatah's armed wing.

In response, the slain militant's Fatah movement, which is headed by Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas and rivals the Gaza Strip's Islamist rulers Hamas, accused Israel of bidding to trigger a wider regional war. Mr. Maqdah's killing marks the first such attack on a senior Fatah member in more than 10 months of Gaza war.

It is the first such attack on a senior Fatah member in more than 10 months of Gaza war

It came only hours after U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken left empty-handed after a tour of West Asia aimed at reaching a ceasefire in the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

Hezbollah strikes military posts in north Israel

Reuters
DUBAI

Lebanon's Hezbollah launched an attack with a swarm of drones on military posts in the kibbutz of Amiad in northern Israel, the armed group said in a statement on Wednesday.

The Israeli kibbutz is located approximately 22 km from the Lebanese border. Israel's military said it could not confirm the attack.

Hezbollah said the attack was a retaliation for an Israeli strike on the Lebanese Bekaa region overnight.

Hezbollah and the Israeli military have been locked in hostilities for the last 10 months in parallel with the Gaza war between Israel and Hamas.

China opens investigation into EU dairy exports as trade tensions flare

Associated Press
BEIJING

European milk and cheese producers have become the latest target in a simmering trade war with China.

The Chinese Commerce Ministry said on Wednesday that it would launch an investigation into subsidies given by the European Union and EU member countries for dairy products that could lead to tariffs on their export to China.

The announcement came one day after the EU released a draft decision to finalise tariffs on electric vehicles made in China, in a follow-up to provisional tariffs announced last month. The tariffs have been denounced by the Chinese government and automakers and threaten to set back the industry's efforts to go global.

Bone of contention: Imported cheese from Europe are displayed at a supermarket in Beijing on Wednesday. AP

The dairy investigation will cover a range of products including fresh and processed cheese, blue cheese and milk and cream with a fat content of more than 10%. It will look at subsidies under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy as well as those given by eight European Union countries including Italy, Finland and Croatia.

China previously opened investigations into European brandy and pork exports at various stages of the EU investigation into Chinese subsidies for electric vehicles. The tit-for-tat investigations have raised fears that a full-blown trade war could be gradually emerging.

CURTAINS

Manuel Neuer retires from international football

AFP

Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, a 2014 World Cup winner, announced his retirement from international football on Wednesday. The 38-year-old played 124 matches for Germany, captaining his country 61 times. Neuer wrote on social media that he was "convinced that now is the right time to take this step".

AIMING HIGH

India eyes 12 medals as Antil-led batch leaves for Paris in advance

GETTY IMAGES

Eyeing an unprecedented five gold and a dozen medals in total, the first batch of the Indian athletics team, including star javelin thrower Sumit Antil, left for the Paris Paralympics in advance to get acclimatised to the conditions. The 16 para athletes will stay at hotels in Paris for a few days before entering the Games Village on August 25.

BACK IN IT

Dhananjaya and Rathnayake lead Sri Lanka's fightback on day one

GETTY IMAGES

Skipper Dhananjaya de Silva and debutant fast bowler Milan Rathnayake, *in pic*, took Sri Lanka to 236 after a top-order collapse on the opening day of the first Test against England at Manchester. **The scores**: Sri Lanka 236 in 74 overs (Dhananjaya 74, Rathnayake 72, Woakes 3/32, Bashir 3/55) vs England 22/0 in four overs.

STEADYING THE BOAT

Ayub and Shakeel stabilise Pakistan after poor start

AP & AFP

Pakistan overcame a jittery start (16 for three) on a rain-hit opening day of the first Test against Bangladesh at Rawalpindi before Saim Ayub and Saud Shakeel guided the hosts to 158 for four at stumps. **The scores**: Pakistan 158/4 in 41 overs (Saim Ayub 56, Saud Shakeel 57 batting) vs Bangladesh.

Odisha govt. lays out the red carpet for Harmanpreet's men

Tribal folk dancers perform at the Biju Patnaik airport to greet the players after which they are taken in a bus in a procession with hundreds of youth on motorcycles escorting them; banners welcome the players all over the city

Moment to cherish: The Indian men's hockey team poses with the Chief Minister of Odisha, Mohan Charan Majhi, at the felicitation programme. BISWARANJAN ROUT

HOCKEY

Y.B. Sarangi
BHUBANESWAR

Carrying forward the legacy of the previous dispensation, the Odisha Government, the principal sponsor of the Indian hockey team until 2036, on Wednesday rose to the occasion and organised a grand welcome for the Indian side which won its second consecutive bronze medal in the Paris Olympics.

Tribal folk dancers performed at the Biju Patnaik airport here to welcome the players on their arrival from Delhi. Then captain Harmanpreet Singh and his men were taken out in a bus in a procession as hundreds of youth on motorcycles escorted them.

Banners welcoming the players were put up all over the city and posters of the Olympic bronze winning side adorned the platforms along the route to the players' hotel.

At a function organised in the evening, all the members of the team, including goalkeeper P.R. Sreejesh, who played his last international match in the bronze medal contest against Spain, and midfielder Hardik Singh, with his left hand (which he injured during the match again Spain) in sling, and local favourite Amit Rohidas, were felicitated by Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi in the presence of Deputy Chief Ministers K.V. Singh Deo and Pravati Parida and former India captain and Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey.

The players were given cheques of ₹15 lakh each, barring Rohidas and Sreejesh, while the support staff were given ₹10 lakh each apart from mementos.

Rohidas was awarded ₹4 crore, while Sreejesh got ₹50 lakh.

"Odisha is our second home. Feels at home. When I go to my village, I tell we must learn from Odisha and what they do for sports. The support we get in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, we don't get it anywhere else. These memories will stay with me forever," said Sreejesh.

Famous sand artist Sudarshan Patnaik handed a photo frame of his work to the Indian team members.

"The Indian hockey team has made the country proud by winning bronze medals in Tokyo and Paris Olympics. I want to assure everyone that as the team prepares for the Los Angeles Olympics, the people of Odisha will support it," said CM Majhi.

Later, the government hosted a state dinner for the players.

No clear favourites as UTT Season 5 begins today

Ready to rock: Harmeet, Snehit, Szocs, Sharath Kamal, Manika, Sathiyan, Ayhika and Quadri will lead their teams' challenge. M. VEDHAN

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

Four seasons have gone by in the Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) beginning 2017 with the league not taking place due to different reasons in 2020, '21 & '22. And, all the four years have witnessed different champions.

In UTT's fifth edition, to be held at the Nehru Indoor Stadium here from August 22 to September 7, there will be eight teams, two more than the last edition. The new teams are Ahmedabad SG Pipers and Jaipur Patriots.

Without doubt, there are no clear favourites. The league promises intense competition and possibly a new champion. Goa Challengers, the defending champion, and Dabang Delhi TTC, 2018 winner and 2019 runner-up, however, will be more than eager to do what no team has done before in UTT: win the title twice.

Barring Sreeja Akula (out of the event due to stress facture) and Archana Kamath, all the top-ranked Indians including Sharath Kamal (playing for Chennai Lions), Harmeet Desai (Goa Challengers), G. Sathiyan (Dabang) and Manika Batra (Bengaluru Smashers) will be taking part.

Ahmedabad's Bernadette Szocs, the Romanian women's world No. 13, and U Mumba TT's Quadri Aruna, the men's world No. 20 from Nigeria, will be the highest ranked players in the league.

Just like what the Indian Premier League has done for Indian cricketers, UTT has done its bit for Indian paddlers. Locking horns with top-notch foreign players and seeing them from close quarters during training sessions has only improved their match-awareness.

"Personally, it has helped me. The players come to UTT from different countries, and we play against them, we play with them," said three-time Olympian Manika.

The format is the same as last time. Each team will play five matches (women's & men's singles, mixed doubles and the reverse singles) in a tie. Each match will comprise three games. The winning team in a tie will be decided by the number of total games won. The team that wins eight or more games out of the 15 will be adjudged the winner.

Like the previous edition that saw Goa pip Chennai 8-7 in the final, there could be an engrossing final and gripping league overall this time too.

Shah front-runner to become ICC chairman

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Jay Shah, the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), has emerged as the front-runner to succeed Greg Barclay as the International Cricket Council (ICC) chairman from December 1.

Shah's candidature received a major boost when the ICC, through a media release on Tuesday night, confirmed Barclay's decision to step down from his post at the annual conference in November.

Shah was in attendance at the CEAT awards on Wednesday evening. While he was confident about India winning the Champions Trophy and the World Test Championship, he did not comment about the ICC development.

According to the rulebook, Barclay was eligible to seek a third term of two years. However, as he has decided to step down, Shah's elevation appears a mere formality. Each of the 16 current ICC directors will have to file nominations by August 27. Should there be multiple nominations, there will be an election in November and the new chairman will take over on December 1.

Jay Shah. PTI

Shah has to serve a cooling-off period of at least three years at the BCCI after his current tenure ends in September 2025. However, he will have to resign as the BCCI secretary before taking over as the ICC chief.

Should he take over, the 35-year-old Shah will become the youngest ICC chief.

He will join the Indians' club of Jagmohan Dalmiya, Sharad Pawar, N. Srinivasan and Shashank Manohar who have helmed the ICC.

We didn't do anything different between ODI, T20I WCs: Dravid

CRICKET

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Former India head coach Rahul Dravid on Wednesday said the support staff strived to carry the energetic "team atmosphere" from the ODI World Cup in 2023 to the T20 showpiece, and the approach helped the Men in Blue end a barren run in ICC tournaments.

Dravid masterminded India's triumph in the ICC T20 World Cup in the Americas before signing off from his role as the head coach in June this year.

"Honestly, I didn't want to do anything different. I think we ran a fantastic campaign in the ODI World Cup... Rohit and the team, and everyone involved in that World Cup," said Dravid at the CEAT Awards.

India had suffered a heartbreaking defeat to Australia in the ODI World Cup final at Ahmedabad in November last year.

"There's nothing we could have done more in terms of preparation, planning and execution," said Dravid.

For the T20 campaign, Dravid revealed that there was consensus on what had to be done. "We needed to create the same energy, the same vibe, the same team atmosphere and hope that on the day, we will have a bit of luck," he said.

Special day: Rohit receives the Cricketer of the Year award from Shah and Goenka, chairman, RPG Group. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Dravid with the Lifetime Achievement Award.

The CEAT awards: **Lifetime Achievement:** Rahul Dravid. **Men's International Cricketer of the Year:** Rohit Sharma; **Men's ODI batter of the year:** Virat Kohli; **Men's ODI bowler of the year:** Mohammad Shami; **Men's Test batter of the year:** Yashasvi Jaiswal; **Men's Test bowler of the year:** R. Ashwin. **Men's T20I batter of the year:** Phil Salt; **Men's T20I bowler of the year:** Tim Southee. **Domestic Cricketer of the year:** Sai Kishore; **Women's Indian batter of the year:** Smriti Mandhana; **Women's Indian bowler of the year:** Deepti Sharma. **Excellence in Sports Administration:** Jay Shah. **Special recognition: Most matches as captain in Women's T20Is:** Harmanpreet Kaur; **Outstanding leadership in IPL 2024:** Shreyas Iyer; **Fastest double century in Women's Tests:** Shafali Verma.

Ganguly, Aronyak and Neelash jump into the lead

P.K. Ajith Kumar
GURUGRAM

From a field of 338, three have moved in front. All of them speak Bengali.

Three Kolkatans – Surya Shekhar Ganguly, Aronyak Ghosh and Neelash Saha – were in the lead with five points each at the end of the fifth round of the 61st National chess championship at the RPS International School on Wednesday.

With six rounds remaining, they were followed half-a-point behind by defending champion S.P. Sethuraman, Karthik Venkataraman, Diptayan Ghosh, Sayantan Das and G. Akash, who scored a surprise win over P. Shyaam Nikhil.

IM Neelash, seeded 16th, upset seventh seed Sankalp Gupta on the third board. With white pieces in a King's Indian Defence game, he did well to convert his advantage in space to victory. He sacrificed an exchange on the 31st move. And 12 moves later, Sankalp resigned, with checkmate not far away.

On the top board, playing from the black side of an Italian Game, Ganguly won in 44 moves against Deep Sengupta. Aronyak opted for Sicilian Defence on his way to a 59-move victory against M.R. Venkatesh.

Important results (fifth round): Deep Sengupta (PSPB) 4 lost to Surya Shekhar Ganguly (PSPB) 5; Sayantan Das (RSPB) 4.5 drew with Karthik Venkataraman (AP) 4.5; Neelash Saha (RSPB) 5 bt Sankalp Gupta (Mah) 4; M.R. Venkatesh (PSPB) 4 lost to Aronyak Ghosh (RSPB) 5; Diptayan Ghosh (RSPB) 4.5 bt Zahid Raihaan (TS) 4; Neelotpal Das (PSPB) 3.5 lost to S.P. Sethuraman (PSPB) 4.5; Mitrabha Guha (RSPB) 4 drew with S. Nitin (RSPB) 4; N.R. Vignesh (RSPB) 4 drew with Antonia Viani (Kar) 4; R.R. Laxman (RSPB) drew with N.R. Visakh (RSPB) 4; P. Shyaam Nikhil (RSPB) 3.5 lost to G. Akash (TN) 4.5; Sriram Jha (LIC) 4 drew with Swapnil Dhopade (Mah) 4; J. Deepan Chakkravarthy (RSPB) 4 drew with Arjun Adireddy (TS) 4; Ajay Karthikeyan (TN) 4 drew with Vignesh Adwaith Vemula (Tel) 4; P. Iniyan (TN) 4 bt Kheerthi Ganta (TS) 3; Sharsha Backer (Ker) 3 lost to Himal Gusain (RSPB) 4.

INBRIEF

Chelsea signs Joao Felix as Gallagher leaves for Atletico

Chelsea on Wednesday confirmed the signing of Portugal forward Joao Felix on a permanent transfer from Atletico Madrid, shortly after England midfielder Conor Gallagher completed a move in the opposite direction. Felix, aged 24, has signed a seven-year contract.

Gukesh and Nepomniachtchi in a thrilling draw

Indian GM D. Gukesh played out a thrilling draw with Russia's Ian Nepomniachtchi to be tied second after the second round of the Sinquefield Cup chess. Alireza Firouzja of France remained ahead with 1.5 points.

Second round results: Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (Fra, 1) drew with R. Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 1); Anish Giri (Ned, 1) drew with Ding Liren (Chn, 1); Wesley So (USA, 1) drew with Fabiano Caruana (USA, 0.5); D,. Gukesh (Ind, 1) drew with Ian Nepomniachtchi (FIDE, 1); Alireza Firouzja (Fra, 1.5) drew with Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 1).

Dahiya clinches bronze; three Indian women in semifinals

Greco-Roman practitioner Ronak Dahiya bagged bronze in the 110kg while three Indian women progressed to the semifinals in the u-17 World wrestling championships in Amman. In the bronze play-off, Ronak beat Turkey's Emrullah Capkan 6-1 to claim India's first medal on Tuesday. He had lost to eventual silver medallist Zoltan Czako of Hungary in the semifinal. In the women's section, Aditi Kumari(43kg), Neha (57kg) and Pulkit (65kg) advanced.

LIVE TELECAST

England vs Sri Lanka: 1st Test, day 2, Sony Sports Ten 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 3.30 p.m.

KSCA Maharaja T20 Trophy: Star Sports 2 (SD & HD) & FanCode, 6.30 p.m.

Indrajith, Lokeshwar rescue TN XI against Haryana

The duo adds 213 for third wicket after an early stutter; the former retires hurt on 139 while the latter misses his ton by a whisker; visitors fail to build on Chahal and Khamboj's strong start

BUCHI BABU

Tarun Shastry
COIMBATORE

B. Indrajith (139 retired hurt, 197b, 13x4, 2x6) lit up the day as Tamil Nadu XI posted 329 for six against Haryana at stumps on day one in the second round of the Buchi Babu Memorial all-India invitational cricket tournament at the Sri Ramakrishna College ground here on Wednesday.

After a 45-minute delay due to a downpour, Tami Nadu, choosing to bat, had a bad start.

Overcast conditions

The overcast conditions played a significant role, allowing pacers Ajit Chahal and Anshul Khamboj to swing the ball effectively.

They dismissed opener G. Ajitesh, who played across the line and top-edged to cover, and Pradosh Ranjan Paul, who poked at an outgoing delivery and edged to first slip, leaving TN XI in a spot of bother at 21 for two.

Indrajith and the other opener, S. Lokeshwar (99, 203b, 11x4, 1x6), displayed remarkable skill and composure, forging a solid partnership.

As the innings progressed, their assurance grew and they unleashed a barrage of shots across the ground. Indrajith played the lead role, showcasing his experience during their impressive 213-run third-wicket association.

Despite the surface offering bounce and carry, Haryana's bowling attack failed to capitalise on the strong start and the favourable conditions.

The Indrajith-Lokeshwar duo took full advantage and put TNCA XI in a commanding position.

The scores: Tamil Nadu XI 329/6 in 89.2 overs (S. Lokeshwar 99, B. Indrajith 139 retd. hurt) vs Haryana. **Toss**: TN XI.

Leading from the front: Indrajith's 139 n.o. helped TN XI get out of trouble. M. PERIASAMY

In full flow: TNCA President's XI's Andre Siddarth came good with the bat. E. LAKSHMI NARAYANAN

Siddarth, Ali propel TNCA President's XI

S. Prasanna Venkatesan
SALEM

Propelled by C. Andre Siddarth's 81 (108b, 8x4, 1x6), TNCA President's XI got to 283 for six against Railways on day one of the Group-B match in the second round of the Buchi Babu Memorial all-India invitational cricket tournament at the Salem Cricket Foundation (SCF) ground here on Wednesday.

He was involved in an 139-run sixth-wicket partnership with S. Mohamed Ali (62 batting, 115b, 7x4, 1x6). Railways' left-arm spinner Ayan Chaudhary took three for 95 on the day.

From 144 for five, Siddarth and Mohamed Ali batted till stumps.

Boundaries

Siddarth came down the track and hit a straight four before he cut Ayan for another four in the same over. He played the cut again for a boundary each off pacer Sanjay Kumar and off-spinner Vishal Harsh, and employed the late cut too for a four each off Ayan and another left-arm spinner Raj Chaudhary. He also charged at Ayan for an inside-out six.

Ali slog-swept to deep midwicket, charged for a one-handed straight shot, and cover-drove for three fours off Raj. He charged at Vishal twice to flick and swipe for a four and a maximum to deep midwicket. Siddarth was caught behind off left-arm spinner Mohammad Saif on the last ball of the day.

Useful knocks

Left-handed opener R. Vimal Khumar (42, 68b, 7x4) and K.T.A. Madhava Prasad (47, 115b, 8x4) notably contributed before the big sixth-wicket stand.

Earlier, the toss and the start of the day's play were delayed because of a wet patch caused by overnight rain on the pitch. And there was a brief spell of light rain that halted play after 7.4 overs.

The scores:
At Salem: TNCA President's XI 283/6 in 85.2 overs (R. Vimal Khumar 42, K.T.A. Madhava Prasad 47, S. Mohamed Ali 62 batting, C. Andre Siddarth 81) vs. Railways; **Toss:** TNCA President's XI.
At Tirunelveli: Jharkhand 178 in 70.4 overs (Sharandeep Singh 78, Tanay Thyagarajann 5/47) vs Hyderabad 61/1 in 14 overs (Rahul Singh 43 batting). **Toss:** Jharkhand.
At Dindigul: Baroda 255 in 79.2 overs (Ninad Rathva 111, Sahil Lotra 5/77, Abid Mushtaq 4/100) vs Jammu & Kashmir 29/2 in 10 overs. **Toss:** Baroda

Arpit Rana fashions Purani Dilli 6's first win

DPL

Sports Bureau
NEW DELHI

Opener Arpit Rana remained unbeaten on 56 as Purani Dilli 6 earned its first points of the competition in three games, winning by seven wickets against West Delhi Lions in the Delhi Premier League on Wednesday.

Chasing 142, PD6 overhauled the target in just 17.1 overs, Vansh Bedi – coming in as the impact player – finishing off in style with a massive six off Navdeep Saini to remain not out on 30 in just 18 balls.

The duo added 42 runs for the fourth wicket but with the WDL bowlers unable to get quick wickets, PD6 was never in trouble.

Earlier put in to bat, WDL managed 141 for nine wickets, unable to get the momentum with regular loss of wickets.

Quickfire knock

Only a quickfire 34 in 14 deliveries by Ekansh Dobal and a nine-ball 23 by Tishant Dabla down the order helped it reach a respectable total.

Captain Hritik Shokeen and Dev Lakra were the only other players to go past 20 runs.

Medium pacer Laxman snapped up three wickets for WDL.

The scores: West Delhi Lions 141/9 in 20 overs (Ekansh Dobal 34, Hritik Shokeen 28, Dev Lakra 26, Laxman 3/41, Aayush Singh 2/27) lost to Purani Dilli 6 146/3 in 17.1 overs (Arpit Rana 56 n.o., Vansh Bedi 30 n.o., Hritik Shokeen 2/21).

Shillong Lajong to take on NorthEast United in the Durand Cup semifinals

Sports Bureau
KOLKATA

Shillong Lajong FC got past a tentative Emami East Bengal FC 2-1 in the 133rd Durand Cup quarterfinals on Wednesday.

The match played at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Shillong saw the host take an early lead via its Brazilian forward Marcos Rudwere. The hosts protected the goal advantage till late in the fourth quarter when East Bengal found the equaliser through a beautiful volley from Nandhakumar Sekar.

The home side regrouped quickly and regained the lead in the 83rd minute when substitute Figo Syndai tapped home to finish a well-orchestrated attacking move.

Still in the middle of its pre-season, East Bengal struggled to get its organisation in the attacking zone right despite having over 60 % ball possession. Egged on by a partisan crowd, Shillong Lajong showed a better conversion rate and created decisive openings to get the win.

While East Bengal, the previous year's finalist, saw its campaign end early, Shillong Lajong made a big statement with a semifinal berth.

Lajong FC now travels to Kolkata to meet the Guwahati-based NorthEast United FC.

A couple of strikes in the second half helped NEU FC get the better of Indian Army FT 2-0 at the SAI stadium in Kokrajhar and book its place in the semifinals.

Spaniards Nestor Albiach and Guillermo Fernandez found the target once each for the Highlanders.

It will be an interesting clash of two regional rivals in the first semifinal scheduled at the Salt Lake stadium on Sunday.

The results: Quarterfinals: At Kokrajhar: NorthEast United FC 2 (Nestor Albiach 52, Guillermo Fernandez 73) bt Indian Army FT 0.
At Shillong: Shillong Lajong FC 2 (Marcos Rudwere 8, Figo Syndai 83) bt Emami East Bengal FC 1 (Nandhakumar Sekar 77).

The heroes: Albiach for NEUFC against Indian Army FT, and Rudwere for Lajong against East Bengal were among the scores.

Ankita Raina downs Llinares Domingo in the first round

Sports Bureau

Ankita Raina eased past Lucia Llinares Domingo 6-2, 6-2 in the first round of the $25,000 ITF women's tennis tournament at Vigo on Wednesday.

The results: $15,000 ITF men, Arad, Romania: Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Felix Balshaw (Fra) & Manas Dhamne bt Mircea Mortasifu (Rou) & Fredrik Solheim (Nor) 6-1, 6-4.

$15,000 ITF: Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand: First round: Men: S. Mukund bt Park Seungmin (Kor) 6-3, 6-1; Vishnu Vardhan bt Jayden Court (Aus) 7-6(5), 6-3.

Women: Monique Barry bt Humera Baharmus 4-6, 7-5, 6-3; Alisa Kummel bt Sonal Patil 3-6, 7-6(4), 6-3.

Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals: Patcharin Cheapchandej & Bunyawi Thamchaiwat (Tha) bt Vaishnavi Adkar & Yui Chikaraishi (Jpn) 6-3, 6-1.

$25,000 ITF women, Vigo: First round: Ankita Raina bt Lucia Domingo (Esp) 6-2, 6-2. **Doubles: Pre-quarterfinals:** Claudia Perez (Esp) & Shuqian Xu (Chn) bt Madhurima Sawant & Saumya Vig 7-6(8), 6-0; Sakura Hosogi & Misaki Matsuda (Jpn) bt Madison Frahn (Aus) Aaddi Gupta 6-3, 6-2.

$25,000 ITF women, Kunshan: First round: Hong Yi Cody Wong (Hkg) bt Riya Bhatia 6-3, 6-3.

Sathish in pre-quarters

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
YOKOHAMA

Sathish Kumar Karunakaran entered the men's singles pre-quarterfinals after Denmark's Anders Antonsen retired midway in their opening round at the Japan Open badminton.

The results: Men: Sathish Kumar Karunakaran bt Anders Antonsen (Den) 6-1 retd.; Kanta Tsuneyama (Jpn) bt Kiran George 21-19, 21-14.
Mixed doubles: Jesper Toft and Amalie Magelund (Den) bt Sumeeth Reddy and Sikki Reddy (retd hurt).
Women: Doubles: Julie Finne-Ipsen and Mai Surrow (Den) bt Rutuparna Panda and Swetaparna Panda 21-8, 21-14.

After Paris silver, Neeraj takes aim in Lausanne Diamond League

ATHLETICS

Press Trust of India
LAUSANNE

Two weeks after winning his historic silver medal at the Paris Olympics, javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will resume action at the Lausanne Diamond League meeting on Thursday, seeking to reclaim the DL trophy at the season-ending finale next month.

Nursing a long-standing groin injury, Neeraj claimed a silver in the Paris Olympics on August 8 with a 89.45m throw, having won a historic gold in the Tokyo edition of the Games three years ago.

The 26-year-old double Olympic medallist on Saturday confirmed his participation at the Diamond League meeting in Lausanne, leaving a decision on a possible surgery after the end of the season.

Neeraj was the Diamond League champion in 2022 and finished second behind Jakub Vadlejch of Czech Republic in the winner-takes-all DL final in Eugene, USA, last year.

Strong finish

This season's DL finals will be held in Brussels on September 14. He needs to finish in the top-six of the Diamond League meetings series standings to qualify for the season finale.

There is another DL meeting – in Zurich on September 5 – which has men's javelin throw event in its roster.

He is currently at fourth spot with seven points he has garnered after finishing second behind Vadlejch in Doha on May 10.

After a busy couple of days post the Olympic final on August 8, Neeraj started training in Switzerland and is determined to finish the season on a high despite being restricted by the injury.

"I came to Switzerland for training ahead of the Diamond League. Luckily, I did not aggravate my injury as I took extra care of that. I thought of continuing my season like most other athletes. There is one month to go until the season ends. I will go to the doctors in my free time," he had said last week.

Neeraj will be up against a top-class field in Lausanne with five of the top-six finishers in Paris Olympics final competing. Only Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, who stunned the athletics world by winning the gold with an Olympic record throw of 92.97m, is missing.

Nadeem had finished fourth in the Paris Diamond League on July 7 with a throw of 84.21m. That was the only DL meeting – as well as the lone event apart from the Olympics – he had taken part this season. He is currently at sixth spot in the standings with five points.

Having been pushed to fourth with a throw of 88.50m in Paris after winning a silver in Tokyo, Vadlejch would be looking to maintain his form in his bid to defend the DL title.

Two-time world champion Anderson Peters of Grenada, who took bronze in Paris with 88.54m, has been on the ascendancy after a poor last season, and he is capable of pulling off big throws, having already gone past the 90m mark in his career.

Neeraj has been the most consistent javelin thrower in the last couple of seasons, before Nadeem pulled off the heist in Paris, and the Indian will start as favourite in Lausanne on Thursday.

Battle ready: Neeraj has been the most consistent this season and should start as the favourite. RITU RAJ KONWAR

Fame's double-edged sword follows shooter Manu

If one successfully obtains the coveted medal in India, they may advise you to proceed with caution as it takes courage and patience to deal with the overnight success that comes with its own cost; the Indian double Olympic medallist is no exception

Mayank Chaudhary
CHENNAI

India is an Olympic medal-starved country. And being a Games medallist in a country of around 150 crore is a rare thing.

Years of relentless effort, dedication, detachment from the world, and immense sacrifice do not guarantee success at the grandest stage.

However, if one successfully obtains the coveted medal in India, they may advise you to proceed with caution as it takes courage and patience to deal with the overnight success that comes with its own cost.

For them, facing a barrage of unwanted questions, unsolicited bits of advice, and weird requests go hand in hand with the sudden fame. Some grow into it; others struggle to cope.

The young sensation, Haryana's Manu Bhaker, joins the elusive list of celebrated sports personalities who rose to fame after the Paris Olympics.

Manu, World No. 5, created history by becoming the first Indian athlete in the post-independence era to win multiple medals in a single edition at the Summer Games in Paris.

Manu finished third to bag bronze in the women's 10-meter air pistol and mixed 10-meter air pistol.

Her unfortunate third-place shoot-off series against the former world record holder, Hungary's Veronika Major, saw her finish fourth, after missing one extra shot in the women's 25m pistol final.

With two Olympic medals, Manu achieved something in Paris that no Indian has ever achieved.

Manu's triumph brought her to the heartland of Tamil Nadu.

Chennai, a city known for star adulation, tried to deliver a dazzling show for the shooter, who was felicitated by the Velammal Nexus for her historic double in the Paris Olympics at the Velammal Mall here on Tuesday.

Velammal group's school students made cardboard cut-outs, a miniature Eiffel Tower, a 10-foot Rubik's cube pop art portrait of Manu, the shooter's hand-drawn portraits, a podium, a crown, and a pageant, among several other things.

At the entrance of the event hall, a well-decorated wall dedicated to Manu, adorned with over 250 Polaroid prints, greeted attendees. At the same time, a 10-year-old boy was ready to unleash his tennis-ball juggling skills on a one-wheel cycle, which might take one back to old Rambo Circus days.

A royal welcome was expected. It did happen with energetic sounds of trumpets and drums all too briefly before the beautiful set-up was marred by a howling ruckus of media persons and YouTubers who gatecrashed Manu's entourage. However, the warmth shown by hundreds of students powered over the commotion as Manu entered the venue.

Before distributing sports scholarships worth Rs. 2 crore to the group's sports achievers, Manu took a moment to sign a few pencil sketches of herself, drawn by the students.

ANI

Once the scholarships were handed out, the spotlight returned to the 22-year-old star. A question-and-answer session followed, where Manu faced a mix of reactions – disappointment for not recognising Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin and applause for knowing popular actor Vijay.

Patient

Manu remained patient throughout, diligently answering each question. Then, a student made an unexpected request: a song.

With a touch of reluctance and a hint of embarrassment, Manu obliged, singing 'Dekha Tenu Pehli-Pehli Baar Ve' by Mohammad Faiz and Jaani – a not-so-expected sight at a medal felicitation event.

But the surprises didn't end there. When asked to join a group of schoolgirls dancing to the Bollywood hit 'Kala Chashma,' Manu couldn't refuse. With grace and good humour, she joined in, grooving alongside the delighted students.

The event wound down, but the barrage of questions didn't.

Right when the proceedings were coming to an end, a reporter fired a curveball: "Vinesh's judgement was politically motivated. What's your opinion?"

Manu's face remained unreadable as she processed the question. Before she could respond, another question was hurled – this time at her mother: "What was your conversation with Neeraj (Chopra)?"

That was the tipping point for Manu. Without a word, she decided not only to leave those questions unanswered but to leave the place altogether.

In India, where successful athletes tend to be celebrated more than they should and remarks over personal attributes take up more attention than professional achievements, the spotlight can feel overwhelming and misplaced.

After all this, if one wants to know how fame truly feels, try asking Neeraj Chopra. Curious about the flip side? Perhaps ask Arjun Babuta.

THE GIST

- Manu is the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal in shooting
- When she bagged the mixed team bronze in 10m air rifle, she emerged the first Indian post-Independence to clinch two medals in the same edition of the Games. She is the second Indian to do so after Norman Pritchard (200m sprint and 200m hurdles) in the 1900 Paris Olympics
- Manu is the fourth Indian to win multiple medals in the Olympics after Pritchard (athletics), Sushil Kumar (wrestling) and P.V. Sindhu

Ultimate Table Tennis and its remarkable impact on the Indian paddlers

K. Keerthivasan
CHENNAI

The Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) League has provided a world-class atmosphere to paddlers from all over the world. Wong Chun Ting of Hong Kong, a former top-20 player, and Nigeria's Quadri Aruna, current World No. 20, have been effusive in their praise of the league's playing environment.

But the biggest takeaway is what UTT has done for Indian table tennis, giving them the confidence and energy to challenge the world's best.

Bengaluru Smashers' Manika Batra described it best.

"Personally it has helped me because players from different countries for the UTT. We play against them, we play with them... it's fun and we enjoy it. I can see the growth, especially in women's table tennis in India. We are all performing well internationally too, thanks to UTT," said Manika.

Szocs and Sharath. PTI

Romania's Bernadette Szocs of Ahmedabad SG Pipers, ranked 13th in the world, said the Indian women players have improved by leaps and bounds. "They have really improved and I am really impressed," said Szocs.

In fact, in the 2024 Paris Olympics, the Indian women edged out a higher-ranked Romania 3-2 in the pre-quarterfinals. In the second rubber, Manika eased past Szocs in straight games.

Sharath Kamal, India's flag-bearer at the Opening Ceremony of the Games, was delighted by the Indian women's team's show.

"This was the first time both our men's and women's teams qualified for the Olympics. Our first milestone was achieved. The women's team reached the last eight while Sreeja Akula and Manika entered the round of 16, which was fantastic. They have put India on the world map. Their performance has been consistently progressing," said Sharath.

UTT has given a golden opportunity for some players like the 16-year-old P. B. Abhinandh, who will turn out for Chennai Lions. According to Sharath, Abhinandh is a good talent. "He had a good season at the National and Internatioanal level. He played in the World youth (u-15) table tennis championships [last year]. He's a bright talent. Tamil Nadu has always produced good players and he is one of them," said Sharath.

About Lions' chances in Season 5, Sharath said: "The management has changed and the new owners have brought in a positive energy. We have a good balance of youth and experience. Japan's Sakuri Mori is playing in her second season while Jules Rolland of France is competing for the first time. Mouma Das is an experienced campaigner. It is important that we start well."

G. Sathiyan was gung-ho about Dabang Delhi TTC's chances. As the captain and only player who has played for Dabang in all its four seasons, Sathiyan said the players were upbeat. "Dabang is more like a family. It's the trust between the players and management that is the key.

"Playing in Chennai, we will have home support and can use it to our advantage. Hopefully, we will be the first team to win the crown twice," said the 31-year-old, the oldest player in the Dabang ranks.

Playing with long-pimpled rubber on her backhand, Ayhika Mukherjee has produced good results on the world stage.

In Busan in February this year, Ayhika stunned World No. 1 Sun Yingsha of China. The Indian credited UTT for her good performancee. "To beat Yinghsa was a morale-booster. I just enjoyed every moment of the match. UTT has helped me a lot by producing a world-class atmosphere," she said.

Harmeet Desai, who will represent Goa Challengers, has been a consistent player. In fact, the 31-year-old was instrumental in India booking a ticket to Paris. It was his gutsy performance against Kazakhstan in the round of 32 that ensured a 3-2 win and a flight to the French capital.

"We have a totally different scenario this year as eight teams will be participating, but we are very confident. There is considerable pressure, but I'm used to it," said Harmeet, who was upbeat about defending champion Goa's chances.

"We will be fighting against seven outfits for the title. The teams have been split into two groups. So, each set is important and we will take it one contest at a time. Our first match is against a strong Jaipur Patriots, which has a perfect balance of Indians as well as international players. Our focus is on that fixture," said Harmeet.

As the players get ready to take centrestage, UTT is all set to provide high-quality action for the next fortnight (August 22 to September 7).

ICAR, Penn State team makes a tool small enough to edit plant genomes

Researchers have developed a plant genome editor consisting of a protein derived from *Deinococcus radiodurans* bacteria — famous for being able to survive extreme conditions. The protein is less than half the size of the proteins CRISPR commonly uses to target specific parts of the DNA

Sanjukta Mondal

Flour, chocolate, cocoa powder, eggs, and butter are all the ingredients to make a sweet treat you crave.

The only thing you need right now is a step-by-step recipe to help you turn the ingredients into a yummy brownie.

Too big for its britches

Nature also has the ingredients it needs to 'make' living organisms, using a genetic instruction manual called the genome. A small change in the genome's composition can determine whether the living thing being made is a flower that exhibits two petal colours, a cat that has big or small ears or if the coriander leaves will taste like soap to some people.

With the help of the CRISPR gene-editing tool, scientists today can precisely edit genomes to introduce desirable genetic traits or remove undesirable ones.

CRISPR holds the potential to revolutionise agriculture in particular by allowing agricultural scientists to increase crop yields and improve resistance to disease and anomalous weather through gene-editing. However, there has been a critical obstacle: a commonly used form of the CRISPR system is too big for plant genomes.

This system uses one of two proteins, Cas9 or Cas12, to target specific parts of the DNA. But they are too bulky for plant cells to accommodate.

Paddy in Bali, Indonesia. Researchers have expressed hope a new miniature genome-editing tool will help rice crops become shorter and less prone to damage during cyclones. SERGIO CAMALICH/UNSPLASH

Smaller is better

A team of researchers led by Kutubuddin Molla from the ICAR-National Rice Research Institute in Cuttack and Mirza Baig from the Pennsylvania State University in the U.S. presented an alternative that could solve this major problem in plant genome editing in a recent paper in the journal *Plant Biotechnology Journal*.

They reported developing a plant genome editor consisting of a protein called ISDra2TnpB, derived from bacteria called *Deinococcus radiodurans* (famous for being able to survive extreme environmental conditions). ISDra2TnpB is less than half the size of Cas9 and Cas12.

V.S. Sresty Tavva, principal scientist at the Crop Improvement Program at the Tata Institute for Genetics and Society (TIGS), Bengaluru, who wasn't involved in the study, expressed enthusiasm over its findings.

"Currently, [since] there are not many options available for plant genome editors, the improved TnpB certainly adds value. One should utilise the advantage of the size of TnpB in generating edited plants for various traits of interest," he said.

TnpB's editing chops

TnpB is a protein made up of around 400 amino acid units (different combinations of the 20 amino acids make up all proteins). It belongs to a family of transposable elements, or transposons. Sometimes called "jumping genes", transposons are parts of a genome that can move from one location to another.

The genome consists of two strands of DNA bonded to each other. Each strand is made up of building blocks called nucleotides. In turn, each nucleotide has three pieces; two are common to all of them whereas the identity of the third one can be one of four options: adenine (A), thymine (T), cytosine (C) or guanine (G). The DNA's 'sequence' refers to the order in which nucleotides containing these four compounds are arranged.

In the new system, TnpB hitches a ride on a piece of RNA that guides it to the target DNA sequence. Once there the TnpB binds with the sequence and eliminates it. The cell that houses this DNA repairs the cut by restoring the "correct" sequence. Thus, the genome is modified to replace an undesirable sequence with a desirable one.

The researchers behind the new study exploited the genome editing abilities of a TnpB-based system to achieve a 33.58% editing efficiency in an average plant genome on targets that Cas9 or Cas12 couldn't reach. They demonstrated that the genome editor was effective on both types of flowering plants–monocots (like rice, which have one seed leaf) and dicots (like *Arabidopsis*, a plant related to cabbage and mustard that has two seed leaves).

Codons and regulators

The team also built four versions of the TnpB-based editing tool and tested them on rice protoplasts – plant cells without the cell wall – to identify the best among them. In their initial experiments, the versions had a low editing efficiency.

To improve it, Dr. Molla et al. did two things. First, they used a process called codon optimisation. For example, cells in the body make the amino acid lysine by following an instruction in the genome represented by a sequence of three nucleotides. Such sequences of three are called codons.

The codon sequence that contains the recipe for lysine varies in different types of organisms. TnpB is a protein extracted from *D. radiodurans*, a prokaryotic bacteria, which has a different codon for lysine than do eukaryotes like plants. So the researchers edited the codon bias of TnpB to match that of rice protoplasts to improve the editing efficiency, Dr. Molla explained.

> The CRISPR system uses one of two proteins, Cas9 or Cas12, to target specific parts of the DNA. But they are too bulky for plant cells to accommodate

The second thing the researchers tweaked were the regulatory elements. When the TnpB and the specific RNA that guides it to the target DNA are transferred from a prokaryote to a eukaryote, researchers also need to include sequences called promoters and terminators that govern and regulate the expression of TnpB.

"We added promoters that are likely to enhance the expression of TnpB and lead to better editing," Dr. Molla said.

A hi-res upgrade

The researchers finished with some finishing touches to the TnpB-based gene-editing system. They deactivated TnpB and fused it with another protein to create a 'hybrid' base editor.

When accompanied by the guide RNA, this editor could swap out a single nucleotide in the DNA sequence.

This wasn't possible with the previous version, with active TnpB, because it tended only to delete DNA sequences and couldn't swap one sequence for another.

The new base editor thus opened up exciting possibilities for crop innovation by facilitating the alteration of genes at the level of individual nucleotides.

A future of edited plants

The TnpB-based editors the researchers built can edit the plant genome using both base editing and transcription activation, two widely used techniques in plant synthetic biology.

Dr. Tavva however said most of the claims were based on data obtained from protoplasts and that the scenario might change when dealing with processes by which an organism absorbs external DNA and integrates it into its genome.

It also appeared that the efficiency of the base editing system fell short in dicot plants as indicated by the results (0.2-0.46% average editing efficiency) reported using *Arabidopsis*. "Regardless," Dr. Tavva said, "the plant genome editing community should try this miniature editing system in crop species of their choice to improve various traits of interest."

TIGS director Rakesh Mishra echoed him: "It is exciting to see a novel and effective genome editing tool being invented. While more development will be needed, alternatives like this are welcome news."

The researchers have expressed hope this miniature genome editing tool will help remove anti-nutrient factors from food crops, reduce their susceptibility to pests, and help rice crops become shorter and less prone to damage during cyclones.

(Sanjukta Mondal is a chemist-turned-science-writer with experience in writing popular science articles and scripts for STEM YouTube channels. sanjuktamondal.sm@gmail.com)

When a lightning bolt cuts through the air it releases its energy as electromagnetic wave. These waves can be heard as whistling noises. KSL

Earth whistles when lightning strikes, and there's a new melody

Priyali Prakash

The earth is surrounded by a bubble-shaped magnetic field that shields the planet from radiation from the Sun and other celestial objects. This field is called the earth's magnetosphere.

During a solar storm, the Sun shoots out charged particles with more than usual energy through the space around it. Without the magnetosphere, these particles could have rendered life as we know it on earth impossible. But because the magnetosphere is there, these particles become trapped in it and zip around the earth rather than towards the ground in two large doughnut-shaped radiation belts in the upper atmosphere. These are called the Van Allen radiation belts.

The American astrophysicist James Van Allen discovered these belts in 1958 and studied them in detail. Van Allen's work was important for humans to go to the moon, and today we contemplate visiting even more distant parts of space. Van Allen found that some parts of the radiation belts were weaker than others and that flying through these parts would be less damaging to spacefaring humans and instruments.

When lightning strikes, electrical energy flows in a path through the atmosphere that we see as a bolt. As it cuts through the air, the bolt releases its energy as electromagnetic waves with a range of frequencies. The earth's magnetic field can guide some of these waves up and into a layer of ionised gas above the atmosphere, where they travel along magnetic field lines – like a train moving on tracks – between the earth's northern and southern hemispheres. The higher the frequency of these waves, the faster they travel (even up to a tenth of the speed of light).

> **Without the magnetosphere charged particles released by the Sun would render life impossible. Instead these particles are trapped in what is called the Van Allen radiation belts**

The frequencies of these waves are often within the human hearing range (20-20,000 Hz) and can be heard as whistling noises through a receiver. When the lower frequency waves among them travel, they can shed some energy via parts of the upper atmosphere, so their sounds have a declining tone.

In a paper published in the journal *Science Advances* on August 16, scientists from the University of Alaska Fairbanks reported discovering a new type of whistler wave produced by a previously unknown wave generation mechanism. They found lightning energy injected into the ionosphere at low latitudes could get reflected like a light from a mirror into the magnetosphere. This contradicted previous claims that energy insertion at low latitudes can't escape the ionosphere.

The discovery has significant implications because including this new form of whistlers could double the amount of lightning energy going into the magnetosphere, which in turn means scientists may have to revise their calculations of lightning's effects on the Van Allen radiation belts.

After all, it's a question of humans' doorway to outer space.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

THE SCIENCE QUIZ

Miles to go under deep waters...

Siva Shakthi A.

Please send in your answers to science@thehindu.co.in

QUESTION 1

Name the transport project that marked its 30th anniversary this year, building on a 200-year-old idea to connect mainland Europe with Great Britain. It goes up to 115 metres below sea level and has the world's longest underwater portion of projects of its kind.

QUESTION 2

For the project in Q1, workers had to excavate nearly 5 million cubic metres of chalky rock that the government later used to build a park named _____ ___ in Kent. Fill in the blanks. Hint: The name comes from that of a plant that grows in the area.

QUESTION 3

Name the world's longest undersea tunnel that also has an underwater portion. It was laid through volcanic, pyroclastic, and sedimentary rocks from the Neogene period in order to host a dual-gauge railway track between two islands.

QUESTION 4

The Thames Tunnel is a tunnel under the Thames river in London. It was built in the mid-19th century and was possibly the first such tunnel to be set up under a navigable river. Marc Brunel, the engineer who built it, was inspired by the burrowing of _____ through wooden ships. Fill in the blank.

QUESTION 5

Name the tunnel in Istanbul through which the first standard gauge rail line connecting Asia and Europe was first operated, in 2013. Parts of the tunnel plunge 60 metres below sea level and 55 metres under-seabed.

(Siva Shakthi is a science communicator in Pondicherry and runs the 'No Nonsense Science Club' through which she debunks myths and misinformation using science.)

Answers to August 20 quiz:

1. Trigger other than spice to which TRPV1 responds – **Ans: Heat**
2. Brain part activated to trigger sweat glands – **Ans: Hypothalamus**
3. What water and TRPV1 molecules do to each other – **Ans: Repel**
4. Non-human mammals that can withstand high spiciness – **Ans: Tree shrews**
5. Pharmacist who devised 1912 scale to measure pungency – **Ans: Wilbur Scoville**

Visual: **Ardem Patapoutian**

First contact: Anmol Agrawal | Vedant Shete | K.N. Viswanathan | Seema Das | Isha Joshi

Visual: Name this man. He led a project in 1928 to build Asia's first underwater tunnel in Asia, in Calcutta. He also drew up maps for a railway network under the Hooghly's riverbed in 1921. BBC (CC BY-SA 4.0)